

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

BY GRANT RICHARDS

YOU WILL FIND HOW TO GET TO ALL THE PLACES, INCLUDING THOSE NOT ON THIS MAP, IN THE TEXT.

E. T. Butler

POLAR BEARS HERE

MR CRANT RICHARDS PERSONALLY RECOMMENDS THIS PETIT-POIS.

THE MISTRAL



TELEPHONE NICE-MO (IT IS QUICKER TO MARSEILLES)



ENGLISH LADIES WALKING

X H.C. WELLS LOOKED DOWN FROM THE COAST OF PLEASURE.

CAUTION! HAS BEEN KNOWN ALONG THE COAST

STONE SATION BY SMOLLETT FEB. 1764

SO FAR, FAR, INTO THE NIGHT!



RARE EXAMPLE OF RIVIERA ARCHITECTURE

THIS TERRITORY HAS NOT YET BEEN DEVELOPED FOR ADVERTISEMENTS



HAVE AN ORANGE

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

LES ARCS

AS THE BIT AFTER SAINT RAPHAEL IS MUCH MORE EXCITING IT IS DRAWN TO A LARGER SCALE

ST TROPEZ

FRE

HYERES

PUGET

TOULON

BANDOL

"OH NO DEAR, THIS IS ONLY

CASSIS

MARSEILLES

COMING OUT OF THIS TUNNEL IS WORTH A LONG BUMPY JOURNEY

P.L.M. FROM PARIS AND LONDON AND MANY OTHER PLACES.

LOTS OF BOATS MAKING FOR XMAS IN JERUSALEM

ILE DE PORQUEROLLES

ILE DE PORT GROS

MIMOSA

887



HINTERLAND CONSISTS MAINLY OF VERY COMPLICATE MOUNTAINS CALLED ALPS

PASSING THIS LINE SAY BY TO CHEMISTRY AND DEMOCRACY

I NEEDN'T MARK WHERE MUCH TREASURE IS LOST

THEY SAY YOU CAN GAMBLE SOMEWHERE IN THESE PARTS

TRES MENTIONED BY SMOLLETT IN JAN. 1764

TELEPHONE TO MONTE CARLO

MONTE-CARLO

MENTON

WHAT DID WE HEAR YOU SAY?

TUBIE

BEAULIEU

MONACO

EZE

VILLEFRANCHE-S/M

NICE

ANTIBES

JUAN-LES-PINS

CANNES

AGAY

YACHT LOOKING FOR MONACO HARBOUR

AEROPLANE FLYING TO CORSICA


IF YOU ONLY PLAY LONG ENOUGH, THIS COMPASS WILL ALWAYS SHOW YOU THE WAY NORTH

ILE DE LERINS

BOUILLABaisse

MAP OF THE COAST OF PLEASURE

ALSO KNOWN AS THE FRENCH RIVIERA
FAITHFULLY DRAWN BY TOMMYMOSS FROM THE LATEST REPORTS OF THE TRAVELLER GRANT RICHARDS AND WITH MANY ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO JOHN HELL



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THE COAST OF PLEASURE



From the original in the collection of
H.S.H. The Prince of Monaco.

The
COAST *of* PLEASURE

Chapters Practical, Geographical and Anecdotal
on the Social, Open-air and Restaurant Life of
the French Riviera

With a few Notes on the Ways of Approach to
that Resort of Worldlings
by

GRANT RICHARDS

*Author of Caviare, Bittersweet
& Fair Exchange*



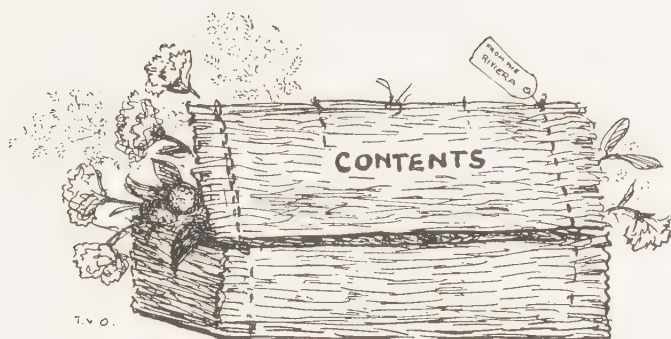
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TOM VAN OSS

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TO MY PLAYMATES ON
THE COAST OF PLEASURE
EDWARD CLODD
A. E. HOUSMAN
FREDERIC JESSEL
THEODORE DREISER
E. S. P. HAYNES
AND
PHILIP SAINSBURY
AND TO THE MEMORY OF
BELFORT BAX
AND
HUGH LANE
AND ABOVE ALL
TO
MY DEAR WIFE
I DEDICATE
THIS BOOK



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BY WAY OF PREFACE

A DEVOTION that has endured for more than thirty years does not in itself excuse the writing of this book. I shall have to put into it more than enthusiasm. If it is to be worth while it must be interesting and it must be accurate and it must be useful. Whether it is interesting is for its readers to decide. It shall approach as near to accuracy as I can carry it in these changing days. Useful — well, I know that it will have some useful pages: I have not trodden with these feet of mine all the yards of that golden coast that links Marseilles with Ventimiglia; I have not travelled in all its conveyances: the *trains omnibus*, the *diligences*, the charabancs, the local motor-cars, the automobiles of the wealthy visitor, the fishing boats, the funicular railways, the *trains-de-luxe*; I have not seen its mountains and its valleys at all the seasons of the year; I have not bathed in its tideless waters; I have not eaten

BY WAY OF PREFACE

in its inns and restaurants; I have not drunk deeply of its little wines – I have not done all these things without learning a thing or two which is worth the trouble of passing on. I love the South. ‘Some talk of San Sebastian and some of Deauville Plage . . .’: in some such strain would I begin had I the gift of light verse. There are those who swear by Biarritz and the Côte d’Argent; there are voices both American and English loud in praise of Palm Beach, Florida, Southern California; I remember that Lord Northcliffe, a great lover of the French Riviera, discovered one winter a stretch of coast in the Portuguese East Indies which he likened to the darling beauty of that which extends from Nice to the Italian frontier. I would dispute with them all. The Riviera of which I write is French, so, by the nature of things, it has for the traveller (dare I say?) certain advantages over anything proud America can boast; and it is Provençal, so, clearly, it takes precedence of the Gascon shore – for Gascony gives on to the Atlantic, and to those of us who descend from the cold, inclement North, the Mediterranean must always offer the more potent charm and a stronger attraction of romance. And as for that Indian view – well, it is too far off for any useful comparison: we shall, most of us, live and die without a greater knowledge of its beauties than we can gain in travellers’ tales. Then there are fractious ones, peevish fellows, who, having no experience, prate of the Simple Life and will not hear the Riviera spoken of. It is gimcrack, forsooth, and crowded, and vulgar. It has lost the qualities that Smollett and Lord Brougham discovered. Well, I would take such critics by the hand and I would prove to them that all this country is one of vivid contrasts: to the Promenade des

BY WAY OF PREFACE

Anglais at Nice I would oppose Eze on its mountain height; to the Casino Gardens at Monte Carlo the peace of Laghet's monastery. . . . Why, in less time than it has taken me to write this page I could take you from the core and centre of all Rivieran luxury to rough hill-side paths and olive groves and over-hanging villages. You should walk for miles and meet no human being save perhaps a peasant with his donkey laden with wood or wine or olive-oil. And then, when we have taken our meal in some wayside inn, and have walked again, and you have thought yourself lost for the night among rocks and on the edge of precipices, you should be taken in less than an hour to the steps of your hotel where, after all, the fact that you can have your own white bathroom and the food of Lucullus is not exactly a disadvantage. I assure you, in short, that on the Riviera you can have the best of both worlds. Simplicity and solitude and the unspoiled beauty of coast and mountain and forest, when you want them; and then, when you tire of nature and of quiet, crowds and carnivals, luxury and the decorated beauty of women.

G. R.

THE RIVIERA PALACE HOTEL,
MONTE CARLO.

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

TO THINK OF GOING AND TO GO

THERE is no lack of reasons for going to the Riviera and every single one of them is good. The least satisfactory is that one should have to go for the sake of one's health. The best is that one should go just for the fun of it. And when should one go? And for how long should one go? As for the when, of course if it is a question of doctor's orders one obeys instructions and that is all there is to it. Rich enough, getting on in years, and a little infirm, the thing to do, undoubtedly, is to start for the South about October 1 and to return to Paris, to New York or to England at the beginning of May. 'Oh, to be in England —' is all very well as a sentiment, but Robert Browning was thinking of an ideal April, and that occurs as often as a blue moon. The same thing is true, no doubt, of all the northern States. But, after all, there are few people who can follow the sun in this uncompromising manner, and I would address myself rather to those less fortunate ones who, remembering the painful diversities of recent winters, have determined this year to soften them by sandwiching in a summer space. Aim at arriving in the South at the end of January. At that period even the hardiest has had his fill of cold days. In the North, spring, effective spring, is still many weeks, indeed months, off, and it is well to seek it in the South where, by the first of February, the weather has generally settled itself and will remain settled for about a month; where the sun will be high in the heavens at midday, hot even; where, in fact, at half-past eight in the morning one can breakfast on a

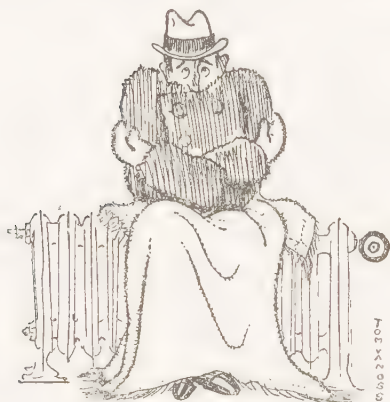
THE COAST OF PLEASURE

terrace in pyjamas and a dressing-gown, and where mimosa will be breaking into a foam of yellow blossom and carnations opening fully to the day.

I will be practical.

To begin with I will assume that you are starting from England. If, being American, you are already in Paris, by so much will your journey cease to be a preoccupation.

Settle the exact day of your departure betimes. Having



MOST PEOPLE HAVE HAD THEIR
FILL OF ENGLISH WEATHER

chosen the end of January you are going with the crowd. At this period the Riviera is not a place to which one can start as the whim takes one. All the places in all the trains are, it is possible, taken for weeks in advance. If you are well off you will go, I suppose, by the *train de luxe*. It has lots of advantages, not the least of them being

that it enables you to avoid changes.¹ Another, the greatest, is that it gets you to your destination four or five hours more quickly than any other train, except that to which I have referred in a footnote. That *train de luxe* — the Calais-Méditerranée Express, 'The Blue Train', as it

¹ There is one other through train from Calais to the South — a train with first- and second-class coaches, *lits-salons* and *wagons-lits*, run in connection with the 2 p.m. from Victoria. This is a new service, coming within a few minutes of being as fast as the Blue Train itself. A real achievement on the part of the P.L.M.!

TO THINK OF GOING AND TO GO

is called – connects with the eleven o'clock service from London and in the high season abstains even from going into Paris. It runs on to the outer Ceinture somewhere short



WHERE THE SUN WILL BE HIGH IN THE HEAVENS

of the Gare du Nord and rejoins the main line somewhere south of the Gare de Lyon. A second, a complementary, *luxe*, is made up in, and starts from, Paris. But I do think that, if you are going from England, breaking your journey

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

in Paris is a nerve-wracking business. You have all the trouble of disengaging your luggage, driving to your hotel, unpacking, experiencing that characteristic raw Parisian cold, trying to crowd a theatre into the evening's programme, sleeping ill because of the noise, and the next day hanging about the shops while your women-kind try, unsuccessfully because hurriedly, to supplement their wardrobes.¹ Then the trouble of loading up and driving



BREAKFASTING ON THE TERRACE IN PYJAMAS

¹ If you go by the Southampton-Havre route from London to Paris you will cross the Channel by night, starting from Waterloo about 9.30 p.m., sleeping between sheets in two-berth cabins from half-past eleven, say, till six o'clock, and reaching Paris at 10.30 a.m. You have time then to lunch and for a visit to the Galeries Lafayette and any other shops that your feminine companion may affect, before the departure

TO THINK OF GOING AND TO GO

to the Gare de Lyon! No, do not sleep in Paris if you can help it. But the *train de luxe* costs a good deal – from Calais five pounds or twenty-five dollars above the ordinary first-class ticket, and that for one journey only. The Wagons-Lits Company's ordinary sleeping-cars, however, on the less pretentious trains are naturally not inexpensive. The Paris à Lyon et à la Méditerranée Railway – to be known hereafter more familiarly as the P.L.M. – has seen to that. No other line takes you to the Coast of Pleasure, so that, I presume, it can charge the Wagons-Lits people what it likes. 'All the traffic will bear' seems to be its motto, and one can hardly blame it, especially in these days of expensive coal! It is difficult to make railways pay. After all, the traffic to the Riviera will bear a lot! Well, anyhow, order your places in the

of the night train to the South. This and the day and night services via Newhaven-Dieppe have the advantage of being appreciably cheaper than those from Victoria and by the Nord railway. Nowadays the services by Dieppe take very little longer. Dieppe, however, has one disadvantage: the customs examination has less urbanity than those at Calais and Boulogne, takes longer and is far more inquisitorial. They would insist at 2.30 in the morning that I was an *antiquaire*, a dealer in old things, for no other reason than that I had used a valueless floor-rug as packing for some books and that I had in my suitcase a couple of framed drawings! Unless I could prove that I was not an *antiquaire* I must stay where I was until day began! That is a personal experience. I would suggest to the Southern Railway that it should get expert evidence as to the difference in passport and customs examinations by the Nord and by other routes and then, if necessary, make representations to the competent authorities. The Dieppe and Havre routes are so much more beautiful, especially in late spring, than those by the Nord, that it is a pity that unnecessary annoyances should interfere with their popularity. Besides, by considering the convenience of the passengers by Dieppe and by Havre, the French Government authorities will be playing into their own hands and promoting the interests of the tax-payer, for the État Railway which works the lines by Dieppe and by Havre is owned by the State.

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train de luxe or any other train some weeks before you need them. Ask for the centre coach of the train and the centre of that coach. So will you achieve greater safety, and, being away from the wheels, greater comfort. If you are travelling alone, you will of course do your best to secure a single-berth compartment. They exist in most cars nowadays. But, if you have to share a compartment, select, unless you are very old, obese, or infirm, the upper berth. One is farther away from one's chance companion! Incidentally, if you are ordering your place by post, do not fail to state whether you are a man or a woman!

I should say here that the P.L.M. has its own sleeping accommodation on all the *rapides* and some of the expresses to the South—excluding, of course, the *luxes*, the Blue Trains, which are made up entirely of coaches of the Wagons-Lits Company. This accommodation of the P.L.M. is *lits-salons* and *compartiments-couchettes*, the first providing for two or three travellers in a compartment, the second for four. The first costs much the same for a berth as a *wagon-lit*, the second considerably less. But the price of *lits-salons* is higher if it is for two with 'draps', which, being interpreted, means simply sheets and so on.

I am not myself a very happy *courette* rider. With four passengers disputes are sure to break out as to whether the window should or should not be left open by an inch or so! In a crowded season I once found myself travelling South with three ladies. One had brought a pet dog into the compartment. By nature unsympathetic to pet dogs, I objected. The regulations were on my side. She appealed to the husband who was seeing her off. He, logical and just Frenchman, smiled. She sank into

TO THINK OF GOING AND TO GO

tears. 'Well, Madam,' I said, 'you can have your dog if you will let me have the window a little open all night.' She agreed. But I had forgotten that elderly French ladies are all of them diplomats; through the night the second elderly French lady saw to it that the windows were hermetically sealed. When after midnight I had reason to believe my companions to be asleep I would climb silently down from my shelf and open one window just an inch. Back again, I would hear an expression of annoyance, rustling, struggles, and the window would be closed.

There is something to be said for the railway company's *lit-salon* if – but only if – you can be sure of getting it with *draps* or of getting the three-berth compartment for two passengers only, for then it really does give room to move about in. I have friends who much prefer it to the two-berth compartments of the Wagons-Lits Company; I do not myself. But, as I have said, the *lit-salon* is not to be found on the *luxes*, where two communicating single-berth compartments provide one with as easy and luxurious travelling as is to be found on this round earth. But there are *lits-salons* on the through train from Calais run in connection with the 2 p.m. from London.

Assuming that you are one of the rich or extravagant ones, that you are travelling from London and by the *luxé*, it may be worth your while to consider breaking your journey at Dover at the Lord Warden. If you do not, you have to be up and out of your home or hotel in London at an hour that you may find too early for ease of mind. Women do say that an 11 a.m. train is too early! If you sleep at Dover remember that the English railway company, forgetting the convenience

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

of its patrons, will not, or did not, arrange for its late afternoon trains to stop at the station which is near the one hotel which is at the harbour gates. One has to drive. No matter. Perhaps it rains—or snows. No matter. Neither the rain nor the snow nor the expense shall damp your spirits: you are on the road to warmth and sunshine and to even greater expenditure! And at your Dover hotel you will say good-bye to English cookery, to English service.



YE OLDE ENGLISH DINNER

FAREWELL TO ENGLISH COOKING

I hope you will not forget—if you have women with you at least—to order a cabin on the boat. Do this about a fortnight beforehand. It costs thirty shillings, or seven and a half dollars, and, like so many things, if you can spare the money, it is worth it. One of the advantages of sleeping at Dover is that you can go on board before the train arrives with its bustle and its crowd. Having registered your big luggage from the quay all the way to your destination, and having no further responsibility for

TO THINK OF GOING AND TO GO

it, you stow away your hand baggage in your cabin and either lie down or stroll about on deck and watch the arriving crowds, keeping a watchful, a wary, eye, for acquaintances, that you may be able to welcome or avoid them according to their quality. The boat starts. Opulent people think that they will ward off the familiar malady with one glass of champagne and a dry biscuit. Perhaps.

The boat arrives. Do not hurry. On the *luxe* they examine all baggage after the departure of the train (just as they do on the limited Golden Arrow to Paris), directly it leaves Calais. The travelling officials are not unduly inquisitive. Kindly souls, they are pleased to see so much wealth being brought into France. Let the crowd go first. Make the most of your privileges. And, if you *are* breaking your journey in Paris and are yet travelling by the eleven o'clock service, then surely you will have engaged seats on the Golden Arrow (at an additional cost of ten shillings or two and a half dollars; it is a supplementary enterprise of the Wagons-Lits people) or on the ordinary train, and again you need not hurry. In the second case, have your keys ready for the *douaniers*, and, having passed their inquisition (you are allowed to carry a few cigarettes, a few cigars, but you are under obligation to declare them!), secure your places; and then, if you have not already done so (as you should have done before leaving London, at the Wagons-Lits agency in St. James's Street), secure further places for the first luncheon in the restaurant car, which you will find somewhere near the head of the train. You will be hungry directly. The advisability of securing your dining and luncheon places beforehand is equally true of the *train de luxe*. One does not want to find that one has to postpone one's

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dinner until nine o'clock. And do not be under any misapprehension about the meals themselves: they are, all things considered, very good, more expensive on the *luxe* (say, eight shillings and sixpence – two dollars) than on an ordinary train (about half that sum), but never expensive judging by ordinary standards. I do wish that the English railway companies would import a few French cooks and give us such omelettes and such baked meats on the trains to Edinburgh and to Penzance!

Of course if, coming from England, you choose, or are forced, to break your journey in Paris, whether for two or three hours – you can do that not uncomfortably by catching the nine o'clock morning train from Victoria – or for a night, or for several days, then you will make certain arrangements beforehand. You will be wise to secure accommodation in Paris if you are sleeping there; and you will, if you are wise, order a table, and, yes, even your dinner, at your favourite restaurant if you are only stopping for two or three hours. For hotels, well, I have found it a mistake to rely on the hotels of the Gare de Lyon neighbourhood. One-horse kind of places. The Normandy in the rue de l'Echelle near the Louvre is an hotel at which ladies can stop by themselves. I wonder the P.L.M. people never had the enterprise before the War to build a fine terminus hotel of their own. I suppose they would say that it is now too late.¹ For restaurants – well, do not forget that on most of the *rapides*, the quick trains, to the South, there are *wagons-restaurants*. But if you are bent, as you may well be, on having a dinner

¹ A friend has just recommended me the Hotel Paylim. Note the pun! It is very near the P.L.M. terminus. Another friend, the not impressive Family Hotel in the rue de Lyon. He says it is clean and simply comfortable.

TO THINK OF GOING AND TO GO

in Paris for its own sake, then dash as quickly as you can from the Nord station to the Lyon station, leave your encumbrances in the cloak room – you can even leave your human encumbrances in the buffet-restaurant of the station; they will be well served – and drive back into more central Paris. You have time. Myself, I have gained some popularity by recommending Marguery in the Boulevard Bonne Nouvelle – a table on the glass-covered terrace from which you can see the passing world, the famous sole of the house (not what it was!), a tour-nedos Rossini and some brie, with the little white wine *en carafe*. You have reasonable time for it. Or you can go and spend more money at the Tour d'Argent on the Quai de la Tournelle, or at La Perouse on the Quai des Grands Augustins, or, rather more economically and in a very Gallic manner, at Les Quatre Sargents de la Rochelle in the Boulevard Beaumarchais. I warn you against doing any of these things, however, if you are of a nervous disposition and keep looking at your watch!

If, being American, you have already spent weeks and months in Paris, you will not need any of the advice given in these last paragraphs. You will just start from the Gare de Lyon. And again, if, being American, you are going to Europe with the definite intention of passing straightway to the South, then I would counsel you to avoid the English Channel and Paris altogether and to travel by a steamer which, taking the Southern route – and what comfort there is in that in full winter! – will drop you off at Marseilles, or may even, if it is one of the Winter Cruise steamers, take you directly to Monaco, the Roman Port of Hercules, which is within a minute of Monte Carlo's Casino, as you will learn.

THE WHERE

Now let us tackle the difficult question of destination. It is the fifth week of the year, remember. The Western Riviera – made up of those too little known haunts of beauty that lie on the coast between Cassis and St. Raphael – is, perhaps, more suitable for a spring stay. I will tell you about them later. Besides, to the lover of



THE SOMNOLENT OF MENTON

gaiety they are – just a little dull. If you are paying only a short visit and want to find yourself near the centre of things, choose Cannes or Nice or Monte Carlo or Menton – or one or other of the villages or hotels which stud that particular stretch of coast. Each of the larger towns has its jealous votaries. Cannes had the reputation of being Russian and English. Now perhaps it is English and American. Cannes is 'good form'. Not long ago, under

the energetic and imaginative direction of a capable gentleman of the name of Cornuché, intimately associated with the fame of Maxim's in Paris, it allowed itself to be exploited to the limit. Its casino is the scene of the highest gambling; its concerts are famous; its golf and its tennis are, I suppose, superb; its *diners de gala*, festivals of beauty – the dressmaker, Paul Poiret, and the painter, Monsieur Jean-Gabriel Domergue, saw to them. It is exquisitely placed too. The Estérel Mountains on its one side, Cap d'Antibes on the other; at its back the high hills which shelter Grasse; and in its face, the sea, the Golfe de la Napoule and the two Iles de Lérins, one of which is distinguished as the prison of the Man in the Iron Mask. And Cannes, although increasing rapidly, is not large. Nice, on the other hand, is very large. It is, justly, the Queen of the Riviera. It is so large that from the station to the sea and the fine hotels of the Promenade des Anglais is a longish and rather dusty walk. It is full of hotels. One might guess that it has enough hotels to house the whole bourgeois population of France. Monte Carlo – well, Monte Carlo is unique. It is not large. It has many of the intimate qualities of a village: every one knows every one else, at least by sight. It is perched rather high. But it is so placed that it loses its sun in the months of winter rather early in the afternoon. And of course there are people who get tired of the proximity of the Casino. Finally, on the edge of Italy there is Menton, which is exquisite, rather low, better protected from the wind. It is small enough for its life to be very much in the centre, with a Casino all of its own where the gambling is not nearly as likely to do you serious harm as that of the Casinos of Cannes or Nice or Monte Carlo. It has its

music in the open air too, and the reputation of being a sleepy place where your nerves will calm down. . . .

Personally, of the four I prefer Monte Carlo.

But Cannes and Nice and Monte Carlo and Menton do not exhaust the Riviera.

There is Hyères, with which, I suppose, one can say that the Riviera proper begins, anyhow the Riviera which is frequented by the English and the Americans. Mrs. (Edith) Wharton lives there; how, living at Hyères, she manages to keep in such intimate touch with the America of her books, I for one cannot imagine. The guide-book calls Hyères the oldest of the Rivieran winter resorts, but does it really ante-date the Cannes of Lord Brougham or the Nice of Tobias Smollett? To get to Hyères you have to change trains – a little over an hour west of Marseilles – at Toulon, or to proceed thence by car. When you reach it you find a town on the slope of the hill, and it is not an exciting town. Nor is its neighbour, Costebelle. Hyères and Costebelle and, later, St. Raphael, always seem to me to be the western equivalents of the somnolence and respectability of Menton. I presume you do not choose Hyères for your winter quarters; and you do not, as I have said, at the beginning of February at least, pause to explore the coast under the Maures. From Toulon the train takes you, with one or two stops that seem accidental, through a country of hills and water-courses (cutting off the Maures, on whose seaward side runs a light railway which you meet again at St. Raphael¹) until, with mountains on each side of you, you come to Fréjus, where, if you are sharp, you will see on your left the ruins of a more than respectable Roman amphitheatre

¹ See p. 49.

— but my business now is not with sights by the wayside. After Fréjus comes St. Raphael, a seaside town of which, if truth be told, one can only say that it is not very gay, no, nor very very attractive, even though one pauses to consider that it has drawn to it and to near-by Valescure, swarms of the most respectable English. Men who write books do not seem to like St. Raphael. ‘That blow-hole’, Baring-Gould calls it and adds that it is ‘the very last place on the coast suitable as a winter resort’, although, later, he suggests that it may be a good thing for the traveller ‘to break his *return* journey to the cold and fogs of England by a cool bath in S. Raphael’s “ventosa”’. Agay, the next little town (at which the quick trains do not stop) is beautifully situated, but it has lost its chief attraction for old-timers like myself, its wayside inn, the Grand Hotel d’Agay whose garden used to run down to the water. One could bathe from its rocky edge. Then come the red rocks and ‘the flaming, sun-kissed summits’ of the Estérel coast, but with no stop until one reaches Cannes. Cannes station, as far as expresses are concerned, serves La Napoule and Mougins and Grasse and a dozen other places which lately have emerged into prominence. Golf, chicken-farming, American millionaires, polo, proud if impoverished Russians, men of letters, French, English, American musicians — oh, you get everything and every kind in the neighbourhood of Cannes. And after Cannes, Juan-les-Pins, a little town which was not to be denied its place in the sun. How it has pushed itself ahead in the last year or two! Somebody’s master hand! A small copy, especially in full summer, of the attractions of the Lido and of Deauville. Then Antibes, from which you drive to Cagnes, or to Cap d’Antibes where

there is an exquisitely placed hotel, the Grand Hotel du Cap, standing in its own park. The Cap boasts some of the best rock-bathing in the world. At Cagnes Renoir lived; Monsieur Tsugouharu Foujita, the Japanese painter, lives there still, I believe, at least on occasion. So does Mr. Phillips Oppenheim, who seems to like golf even more than he does the less strenuous games which are played on a different texture of green. Cagnes has its golf course. One comes to Nice. An enormous place, where the train delays twenty minutes or more but where if, hurrying, you do go and look at the surroundings of the station you will see nothing to enchant you. As I have said, the sea and the Promenade des Anglais are a walk away.

The train next stops at Villefranche, a far-flung town of villas and an old sea-port; and then, just on the other side of the narrow neck of land which joins the sprawling lizard-like promontory of Cap Ferrat to the mainland (it looks exciting even on the map – but wait till you see it from the Higher Corniche!), you come to Beaulieu, whose station serves Cap Ferrat and St. Jean. Cap d'Ail – *ail* is garlic – next, which, like Menton, four or five miles away on the other side of Monte Carlo, used in the old days, when hypocrisy was in fashion, to be the resting-place of those scores of English people who, going South for the pleasures of 'the tables', would not let their friends know that Monaco was their destination but stayed just on the French side of the border. 'Cap d'Ail, Alpes-Maritimes' as an address did not suggest Monte Carlo. Suitably, it has several good hotels, the Eden being the largest and perhaps the best. After Cap d'Ail, Monaco, where the train stops presumably out of politeness to the Capital and to the Prince,

although from the *luxes* and the *rapides* at least few passengers ever alight; and then — Monte Carlo, without which, and all that it stands for, that stretch of coast from St. Raphael even unto Ventimiglia would relapse into a mid-nineteenth-century quietude. From Monte Carlo the train runs under the base of Cap Martin to Menton, and with Menton the French Riviera comes to an end. You will see the whole district mapped out in the amusing drawing with which Mr. van Oss has decorated the inside front cover.

ON THE JOURNEY OUT

I HAVE said enough of the journey to Paris. Most of my readers knew all about it before they bought this book. It is the journey South on which I must spread myself a little. I have just been looking at the menu of the dinner ('Prix 45 francs') of which I myself partook on the *luxé* on January 3, 1927, having seen to it that while I dined the conductor made ready my compartment for the night. By the way, you will surely tell him that you want the window open. There are contrivances to that end. If, however, you want it very open, take care. In the first place it is not impossible, although extremely unlikely and difficult, for the thief to hook things out of the carriage window. In the second, there are all sorts of violent currents of air in the dead waste of the night when you are travelling fast. Your clothes may be blown, sucked, from their hooks. I cut the following from a newspaper last spring:

'Some astonishment and amusement was caused in one of the principal streets of Lyons by the sight of a tall Englishman, who was walking along attired in a pair of silk pyjamas,' says a Reuter Paris message. 'The embarrassed stranger was the victim of cruel necessity. He had taken a sleeping-car from Paris, and had hung his clothes near to the open window. In the morning he found that they had disappeared, doubtless having caught the fancy of a thief at some station at which the train had stopped, who had noticed them hanging by the window. The Englishman

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therefore made the best of a bad job, and boldly in his pyjamas faced the streets of Lyons in search of a ready-made suit.'

I wonder. Reuters are reliability itself, but, all the same, I know very well that a pyjama-clad Englishman would have sought shelter in the excellent Lyons station hotel and sent for a new suit rather than have gone to look for it himself. Moreover, if he was in one of the South-bound *rapides* he would have discovered his loss at Marseilles or Toulon and not at Lyons, and it would have been in one of those places he would have searched for a suit. And had he no second suit in his baggage? There are stories which do not bear examination in detail. Still, the Englishman, like Hakbakuk, is *capable de tout*. All the same, don't have your window too open or all your clothes may be covered by a film of dust. The French railways use soft coal.

On that January 3 it really was a good dinner. Soup, of course; then *croustade de ris d'agneau*, whose paste melted in the mouth; salmon trout followed by a *poularde* which claimed to have come from Bresse and which might very well have been reared under the peaceful shade of the Church of Brou. Followed *petits pois*, an ice, and fruit. All for eight and sixpence! And on the most expensive train in Europe! Verily things are seldom as dear as rumour makes them! And the wines on that train are reasonable. It is true that they do not include the Listrac, one of the best of beverage clarets (the secret of which I now give to all my readers: it is to be found in the ordinary *wagon-restaurant*), but they carry a Margaux at thirty pence, a Chablis at three and four-

pence . . . and as for liqueurs, they cost about a shilling each.

And so to bed. You have perhaps forgotten to provide yourself with a bottle of water for the night – Vichy or Evian, Vittel or Contrexeville. No matter. You need not go all the way back to the *wagon-restaurant* to fetch it. The conductor will go for you; you will remember this and other services later on when, at your destination, having passed your small baggage out of the window, he pauses for a moment for his tip. Perhaps, like Sir Alfred Yarrow, you are one of those whom the train's movement lulls at once to sleep. If not you can read. There is a lamp in the panelling just above your pillow. All these gadgets of travel are cunningly contrived. Nevertheless, I do wish Lord Dalziel of Wooler could be induced to make an experimental coach after, firstly, taking the recommendations of the Touring-Club de France which has done so much to make healthy the hotel bedrooms of provincial France, and, secondly, listening to the suggestions of those sensible American architects who are learning how to do without dust-collecting cracks, crevices and mouldings. First to go would be that plush, and then that stamped and embossed leather which seems so nicely contrived to resist the cleaner's efforts. . . .! Still, with all its little faults – and it has few – we may well be grateful to the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits. Heavens, what stories one used to hear in the 'eighties about that long journey to the South! Now if you are not comfortable it is your own fault. You need not even be very rich to enjoy all the privileges the Compagnie provides. . . . By the way, it is interesting to note that the best of their coaches are made in England.

ON THE JOURNEY OUT

Do not instruct your conductor to call you at any particular hour; the train may have lost time on the road. Say rather, unless you are very lazy, that he is to tell you when you are passing through Marseilles – the *luxe* does not go into the terminus – so that you may be dressed to see the beauty of the coast or at least, while dressing, be able to peep beneath the lifted blind at the sun-flooded mountains. Sun-flooded? Well, I hope so. It has happened, though, that, when I have been most anxious to show off the Mediterranean in all its early morning brilliance, the weather has chosen to sulk. One cannot be sure. On one occasion, I remember, I had promised my friends the sun at Avignon. They were looking forward to it. It was daybreak on February 2. Thirty-six hours before, on the last day of January the Great Western Railway had taken three hours to carry them from Paddington to Maidenhead and they had walked into ditches in the fog of Maidenhead Thicket! And at Avignon, alas! instead of the morning sun it was the rain that woke us. It poured. Later in the day, however, after we had arrived at Cap Martin and had lunched, the sun came out and, except for its enforced absence during the nights, it remained out for twenty-eight consecutive days, from February 2 to March 2. Not one drop of rain. Our holiday at an end and on our homeward journey it began to drizzle as we passed through Nice!

You can get an English, an American or a French breakfast in any of these *wagons-restaurants*. Eggs and bacon and all that sort of thing. On this morning you had better take what you are used to. Looking at a new world is a very exhausting business. The *luxe* from Calais, if it is punctual, lands you at Nice at midday,

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

twenty-five hours after you left London, and at Monte Carlo an hour later. In the case of the *rapides* which follow hard on its tail you will be well advised to lunch on the train. And, however you travel from Marseilles to Menton, remember that the trains that do run into Marseilles station run into a terminus, that, when they emerge, their direction is reversed, and that, while coming down from Paris, it is the right hand that gives you the best views, the Rhone, Avignon and so on, after Marseilles it is again the right hand that gives you the sea. This is a useful tip if you are choosing a table for breakfast or ordering your places for lunch. It is possible, however, that, even in the winter, the sun on the right side of the wagon may be too much for you!

But I am going too fast. You may be one of those thorough travellers who like to see all that there is to see. In that case you will perhaps have come down from Paris in a leisurely manner, pausing at Valence and Orange, Avignon and Arles. These places are better visited when the leaves are on the trees. Besides, one finds it hard to tear oneself away from them. Provence has a potent attraction. Those strong Americans, Thomas A. Janvier and his wife, came first to Europe by one of the steamers that bring you to Marseilles. It was their whim. Marseilles held them a little, and then by slow stages, but all the time with the idea of getting to Paris in a few days, they travelled through the Midi until they arrived at St. Rémy, a little town with a Roman triumphal arch, near Les Baux – Les Baux is a marvel – and then, finding a pleasant inn, they remained – for two years, I fancy – without going North at all. Thomas Janvier spoke no French; his wife did. They became almost Provençals, *Félibres*

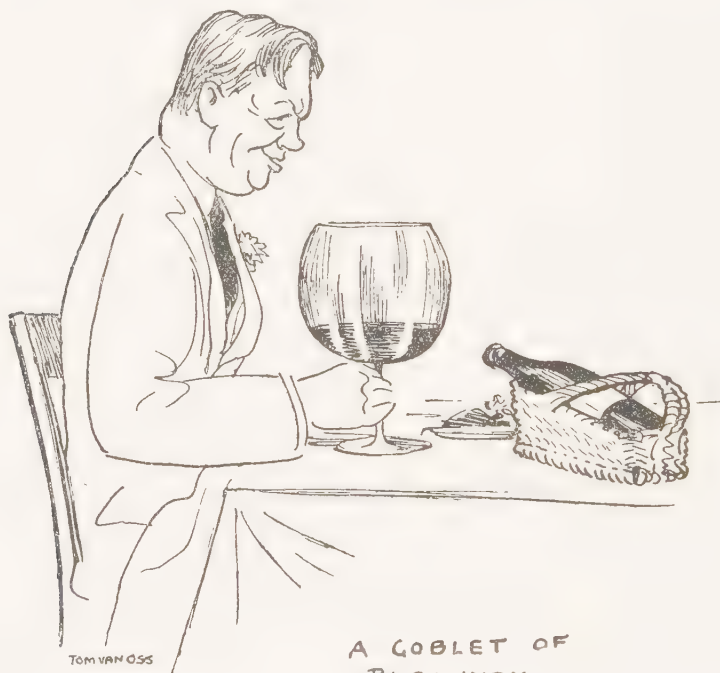
ON THE JOURNEY OUT

indeed, cousins in the spirit to Mistral. I have myself seen Mistral, have touched his hand, and have been spoken to by him. 'And did you once see Shelley plain?' I deserve just such a rebuke. One squanders one's opportunities. . . . When I myself first went South in 1899 the Janviers had all the curious lore of the Midi at the ends of their fingers. They gave me written and most detailed instructions. I wish I could lay my hands on those notes now. I was told where at Martigues I could get the best *bouillabaisse*, the best in all these coasts – it was at the Hotel Chabas – and that when I got to Arles I was to forsake the railway and travel in a trap which I should hire from a certain Noë Murge who was to give me his one-eyed mare. It was long before the days when motor-cars crowded the roads, and I was to saunter through the ways of Provence seeing, among other things, a 'bull-tease' at Fontvieille, and the majesty of the Pont-du-Gard. . . . I did as I was told.

One other word about the journey South. I myself, being greatly energetic, have found that a cheap and pleasant way is to travel from Paris by day. One can leave by a *rapide* at nine in the morning, but I have chosen on several occasions the slower train at seven. The nine o'clock passes it on the road, the pull with the earlier train being that it stops at Dijon at midday, stops for almost two hours. Tip the conductor to look after your things, and you can walk into the town and take your lunch in Burgundian calm at Racouchot's Trois Faisans, an unspoiled restaurant of the city. It was here that I first saw people drinking their red wine out of those huge goblets that up till then I had seen used only for the oldest and most expensive champagne-brandy. Apparently to use

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

them for red wine is a Burgundian custom. This year I have seen it in the North at the Couronne at Rouen and at Taglioni's in London. To me it seems unnecessary. However, *chez* Racouchot, or at the Cloche or elsewhere



A GOBLET OF
BURGUNDY

in the neighbourhood, it is a different matter – if you are tasting a great Burgundy in the Burgundy country you want to experience the very essence of its bouquet. Well, after your wine and a *fine maison* – by which is meant the ordinary, and moderately priced, brandy of the house – you stroll back to the station and your train will take

ON THE JOURNEY OUT

you not very quickly toward Marseilles, which you reach at the bed-time hour and where the Terminus Hotel at the station will provide all that is necessary for a short visit. If, on the other hand, you elect to travel on, the two trains, the 7 a.m. and the 9 a.m. from Paris, join up at Marseilles; you can continue in the same compartment; you could indeed have transferred in the 7 a.m. to a *courette* at Valence some five hours earlier. The advantage of coming from Paris by this seven o'clock train is that you see the country as far as Lyon, say, in daylight, and that you see something of Dijon. The disadvantage is that, unless you sleep at Marseilles, you pass along the Mediterranean coast in darkness, arriving at Nice almost before it is light. And to miss the Mediterranean seaboard is a thousand pities!

MARSEILLES AND FROM
MARSEILLES TO TOULON

OUR business now is with Marseilles. You feel that with Marseilles the Riviera begins and, although you are wrong, and although Marseilles can be bitterly cold, perhaps you have, in the last analysis, some reason on your side. Thomas Janvier told me to stop at Marseilles and, choosing a certain hotel that looks over the Vieux-Port, I was to have my first meal at Bregaillon's, which is, so to speak, on the pavement of the Quai itself. There I should get that fish stew which he had advised me to look for at Martigues and of which Thackeray has sung, and *brandade* too, and *aioli*, that splendid and potent garlic sauce, and oysters at a few pence a dozen, and *oursins*, those prickly pears of the sea. At one time and another I have tried all the strange sea-foods of Marseilles and have found them curious and satisfying. The wine Thomas Janvier urged, Cassis, a white wine from the vineyard of one Bodin at Cassis, a little along the coast, is particularly grateful if drunk with shell-fish. I have been to Bregaillon again since then – but much of its old magic seems to have been forgotten. It has joined hands with its next-door rival, Basso, and there seems to be less *langouste* in its *bouillabaisse*, and, although Cassis is still in its cellar, the *cuvist* showed an unaccountable aversion, shared by the *patron*, from bringing it up. I was a foreigner and I must be induced to drink Chablis which would cost considerably more. I would not. I insisted upon Cassis – and it was worth it. Knowledgeable people

tell me that the wine of Cassis is often not the real thing. One is told the same of the wines of Yquem, Capri and Bellet – to write in one sentence of the great and the small. By no possibility, it appears, could Cassis produce all the wine which so describes itself. I don't know; but I do know that the Bodin Cassis satisfied both Mr. E. S. P. Haynes and myself and that we drank a great deal of it. Later – September, 1927 – we found at Monte Carlo a Cassis of another mark, Clos de la Magdaleine, which almost made us waver in our allegiance. But Mr. P. Morton Shand warns one to be careful of all wines of a particular 'mark'. *He* does not admire the Bodin Cassis, so perhaps the Magdaleine is better.

I was told too to eat, and have eaten more than once, *chez* Pascal, a very Provençal house, in the rue Thiers, on the island at the side of the Vieux-Port, which seems to me very dramatic and Goya-ish in atmosphere but not particularly good. I was told too to go to Isnard, in the rue Thubaneau, but its reputation is so widely spread that I never succeeded in getting a table; and I was told to go, whenever I felt rich, to the Réserve, on the Corniche, magnificently looking on the sea. The Réserve is hotel as well as restaurant; its service is sadly slow, but they do say that it has the best *bouillabaisse* in the world. Who am I to decide? After all, one comes to Marseilles as much to eat this stew as for any other reason, so I need not apologize for its name appearing so often in these pages. This is the only part of the world in which you do find the real *bouillabaisse*; I have tried it in London and even in New York, but bread, oil, saffron and crayfish do not make a *bouillabaisse*: certain fish of the Marseilles reaches of the Mediterranean are essential, strange,

odd-looking fish, with bristles and whiskers and spines. One day we ordered it for the next day's lunch at a simple little Monte Carlo restaurant, and at 6.30 in the morning the waitress came to seek us out and my wife was called from her sleep to inspect the fishes the girl carried in her apron. Forbidding and fascinating objects they looked, and, poor dears, they were still alive. Could we do without *langouste*? Perhaps no *langouste* could be found. No, we could not! A *bouillabaisse* without *langouste* indeed! Ridiculous! The *langoustes* were found, and little crabs, too, the size of half a crown, which added the correct variety to the pot. In the result that *bouillabaisse*, my wife said, and she is much more a *bouillabaisse* enthusiast than I am, was the best she ever ate.

Marseilles is a strange place. It looks at first sight so interesting and its associations, literary and historical, are so absorbing – and yet it may be, after a day or two, so dull. Its citizens think it the finest city in the world. 'If only Paris had a Cannebière it would be a little Marseilles,' they say, the Cannebière being a broad street, whose name is a relic of the days when it was the site of a 'rope-walk'. It bisects the seaward part of the city and runs straight down to the old harbour.

During the War, Marseilles was a strange place to be in, and, even to-day, it gives you the impression of being entirely without reserve, of being all unlaced and not a little sinister. One feared spies in those days. So much passed through the port and so much might be learned. I remember that, having gone to bed in March, 1918, after midnight – I had been drinking old brandy from a cup in one of the Cannebière cafés: it was not allowed to serve spirits after some early hour even in France! – I

MARSEILLES TO TOULON

was not a little annoyed at being awakened by a monstrous blow on the door while it was still hardly daylight.

'What is it? I didn't ask to be called early,' I cried.

'The police.' The voice was truculent, ominous.

Half bemused by sleep, I was yet sufficiently alive to know that you couldn't monkey with the French police in a place like Marseilles in the worst days of the War. Pushing my eyes open, I sprang from bed and, examining my conscience uneasily, unlocked the door. A French *agent* in uniform, and, as it turned out, an English detective in plain clothes.

No time for formalities. No time for politeness even.

'Your passports!'

Where the deuce had I put the passports? I was still too confused to remember. Ah, I found them. At that troublous time one's every move was registered on one's passport, so it seemed hardly sensible to demand if we had been in any neutral country. Such an excursion would have showed so clearly.

I shook my head. I said 'No' in French and in English. All the same I felt sure that I had done something that



THE FRENCH POLICEMAN

(See p. 298)

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

had brought me under suspicion and that I should be hauled off to the police-station. This, I feared, was a visit inspired by false information. No doubt I should clear myself before it came to standing up against a wall and facing a French firing party, but I should have some very uncomfortable moments first!

The two nations examined the passports. Apparently they were in order.

'Why have you chosen me out for your visit?' I asked when I knew all was well, that I was safe.

My question was treated with derision. 'You are not being treated with any special honour,' I was answered. Apparently everybody who arrived and put up in Marseilles in those days had a police visitation.

'But why so early in the day?'

'If we didn't come early you'd have very likely gone out,' my countryman replied, and I had to agree that there was some reason in his method.

And yet a few days later I had actually to complain to the authorities that at Havre, a place even more dangerous from the spy point of view, I was allowed to stay a night or two in the hotel from whose windows one could see the whole going and coming of the War, for it looked on to the chief landing-stages, and that I was not even asked to register! The control varied in strictness apparently even at that critical time. And I remember that very week an English detective on that northern coast telling me apropos my week-old experience that he himself had recently been transferred from Marseilles and that, although the police were very busy there, it was so criminal and so complicated a city that even he, a stranger, had been able to assure his superior that he knew a dozen

ways of lying hid within its confines for a month or as much longer as he chose.

Yes, writers of sensational novels have laid scenes of horror in the underworld of Marseilles without exaggeration and also without, I imagine, any real knowledge of the matter. They used to, they still do, especially since Mr. Thomas Burke has shown them how well and convincingly it can be done, lay the same sort of scenes in Limehouse and Stepney Causeway. All the same, Marseilles has its evil romance. It is one of the places on the road to Buenos Aires. Girls, Monsieur Londres tells us, are smuggled on board the ships and hidden in the airways, whence they emerge only under cover at night to sniff the open sea. . . . Emigrants too manage to get from Marseilles to the United States without the usual formalities. Evil romance? Avoid the narrow and sinister streets that run down from the neighbourhood of the Hotel de Ville to the Vieux-Port if women are of your party. Mr. Richard Wyndham has painted these byways with extraordinary skill, but one does not perambulate them happily.

What is there to see in Marseilles? Not much that is not on the surface. Your guide-book will tell you all about it; although, unless it is a very new edition indeed, it will not tell you it was the birthplace of Gaby Delys and that she left a very beautiful villa to the town for the use of the poor. Rather is it a place from which to make excursions to the westward. And if you can spare a day, do motor up to La Sainte Baume. You can get to it by train, but it is a tiring business, in any case necessitating a carriage drive at the other end. To drive all the way to La Sainte Baume you take the road eastward to Aubagne

and then climb into the mountains. What mostly attracts the visitor and the pilgrim is that here is the Grotto of Sainte Madeleine, where in a cave in the cliff she spent her last days. An extraordinary place in many ways. You take your meal, indeed you can stay, at the Hostellerie. You will sleep surrounded by wild mountains and almost virgin forest.

And before you leave Marseilles you will of course row out to the Château d'If – that is if you have any respect for the genius of Alexandre Dumas. It is a 'Monte Cristo' place. The Man in the Iron Mask was imprisoned here too. You will meet his memory again directly on the Iles de Lérins.

You quit Marseilles, and travel toward the Coast of Pleasure. In my opinion Cassis, where the wine comes from, is the first place in which you need take an interest. The Panorama-Hotel, English-owned, has been recommended to me; it is not dear. It is overlooked by a marvellous cliff, a spur of the mountains. I walked by the edge of that cliff from Cassis to La Ciotat – a regular ship-building place – in a matter of a few hours. A walk! The wind that day threatened to blow me into the sea. But I planned then, and I still hope, to do that walk again and again. Cassis is a pleasant place to start from. I do not remember that there was any proper path. One trod the fragrant turf of Hymettus. At the time I was staying at St. Cyr-sur-Mer, to which I was attracted by the fact that it stood midway in the bay which is guarded on the right by that extraordinary headland, Bec de l'Aigle. St. Cyr is not much of a place, and as for the Bec, well, although the walk from Cassis to La Ciotat winds round

its flank, yet it is more dramatically seen from the window of the railway carriage than from anywhere else. The Bec was a disappointment. For years I had looked at it as I passed and had been sure that it was from its height that the cry 'Great Pan is dead' had rung forth. The bay of La Ciotat has no really good bathing in it. In that same month of May I walked too from St. Cyr into Bandol. Another good walk, but I found no way of keeping to the actual coast. It is at Bandol, a miniature watering-place, that the good bathing begins. One can plunge from the arm of the harbour into deep water, or, a little farther on, one can bathe from sand. A jolly little place, Bandol; artists have discovered it as they discovered Cassis. They tell of a Londoner who, emulating the Janviers, came for a fortnight and stayed three years. I stopped there a week myself. It was at the beginning of May and the weather was abominable. The seven days were enough for me, but then the country at the back is not exciting, and the farmers keep fierce dogs. The Bandol villagers dance delightfully in the open air. The whole thing is real, unspoiled, characteristic. And after it there are similar places, suburbs, so to speak, of Toulon, which is a fortress much mixed up with the early career of Napoleon, a large town, an arsenal, and a naval stronghold. It can send forth its thousands of picnickers. I don't think Toulon is a place in which one need spend much time. It did not greatly interest me. It is the first station at which the *rapides* stop after leaving Marseilles, and you go from it to Hyères and to the Iles d'Hyères – Porquerolles, Port-Cros and Levant; also it is the taking-off place for the light railway which runs under the Montagnes des Maures to St. Raphael, following a stretch of coast which the

ordinary railway evades, cutting, as it does, considerably inland through Puget, Carnoules and Les Arcs. People who know tell me there are good restaurants at Toulon: the Christinelle, the Apollo, the Raphael and the Sourd; and Sir Denison Ross, from his profound knowledge, suggests the Chapon Fin. I cannot write of these from experience. Nor indeed, to be frank, can I say much from personal knowledge of the immediate environs of Toulon. One sees it surrounded by its steep little mountains, is interested, and one passes on. All the same, it was pleasing to hear last year of the 'robber's grotto' at the top of one of these mountains, a grotto in which a hero of the War, become bandit, lived and terrorized the population. He was the Dick Turpin, the Robert Macaire, of his moment, and so he would have continued had he not been 'betrayed by a girl friend'. When at two in the morning the detectives sprang upon him he was found to be carrying a carbine, two loaded revolvers, fifty cartridges, and two daggers – 'but the ambushade was so unexpected that he had no chance to use this armament'. The police visited his 'hill-top bastioned grotto': its vistas commanded all the roads and paths of attack. 'The bandit's lair was well furnished. There were two camp beds, several comfortable armchairs and carpets. There was a well-equipped kitchen. . . .' All this in 1926!

In 1928 it is still possible in Toulon's underworld, and that without too much trouble, to see opium being smoked and even to smoke it oneself. Such things must be tolerated in a seaport of the Toulon type.

With Toulon the Coast of Pleasure may be said to begin.

HYÈRES, THE COAST OF THE MAURES, ST. RAPHAEL AND THE ESTÉREL

YES, with Toulon the Coast of Pleasure begins, but that fast train that has brought you from Paris leaves the sea at Toulon and makes its way behind the Montagnes des Maures through valley and vineyard, water-course and olive orchard, to St. Raphael. It is a strange country to a northerner, and in the winter it is arid, dry, lacking exciting incident, although its hill-top villages and beetling castles can never be without interest. But before you and I go with the train we must see something of Hyères, ten miles east of Toulon. I will be wilful and say very little about it save that its attractions include golf, tennis and croquet, and I will say even less about its sister, Costebelle. These towns exist. They have beauty. That is all I have room for, although the memory of a lyric article in *The Times* makes me wish to go again to Costebelle that I may drink Pellegrin, the wine of the neighbourhood. Camp-Romain, a 'mark', which is possibly of the neighbourhood, may, for all I know, be a standardized variety of Pellegrin. It is white and not disagreeable. Mr. E. S. P. Haynes and I asked specifically for Pellegrin at Bormes; they seemed to be surprised.

The light railway which may take you to Hyères also takes you under the Maures to St. Raphael by a coast which at the right season is fairy-like in its beauty. I paused first at Bormes-les-Mimosas, high on its hill, a

mile or so from the coast, and with a pleasant-looking high-perched hotel, the Grand, which also calls itself rather charmingly the Pavillon de l'Orangerie. As if not satisfied with its sufficiently floral and charming name, the inhabitants of Bormes are seeking to have their town called also 'Le Mont des Roses!' From Bormes you look over vineyard and wood, cliff and beach, a wide prospect of sea and land hardly touched by the modern builder. Was it at a little restaurant in Bormes or later at the Grand-Hotel at Le Lavandou that I found in the wine list the surprising items: 'Dog Head Rum Grand Cru, 4 fr.' and 'Grog 5 fr.'? After Bormes, quite close, a fishing village, Le Lavandou, where years ago I stopped at the Méditerranée – an hotel which remained mysteriously closed last summer when I was at the Grand, where they have two young waiters, twins and as like as two peas, and a chef who is really proud of the cookery of Provence, and will make cunning dishes for your delectation if he knows your preferences. The Grand is clean and simple and actually on the beach. At its side is the Place of the village. While I was there the 'circus' arrived. A family affair: a motor van for the performers and their babies, another for two horses which did not perform, and a wagonette. Trapezes and so on were erected in the Place and, as night fell, village folk and visitors sat round and watched the strong man, the conjurer, and the contortionist – three in one. At intervals a collection was made. In the morning the contortionist helped to wash up, walked his horses into the sea and attended to their toilet, that they too might be healthy. In May the woods at the edge of the beach to the west of Le Lavandou are carpeted with flowering

misembryanthemum from which one can tread on to sandy beach and into water so clear that one feels that one could count the grains of sand. The farther one walks and scrambles westward the more remote from civilization one seems to be. Robinson Crusoe coves succeed one another. One can bathe without considering convention. . . . Le Lavandou is a convenient place from which to visit the islands Port-Cros and Porquerolles. A motor-boat for your own party is not costly, but do not start unless the seaman is confident that the sea will remain calm and until he thoroughly understands which of the islands you are to see. Both islands can be visited in one day, but not with leisure, and it is very easy for a dispute to arise as to whether you said Porquerolles, which is farther off, or Port-Cros. Myself, I started twice for Porquerolles, being turned back on the first occasion by the rough sea, and succeeding in reaching Port-Cros only, on the second: the seaman swore that he had only contracted to take us to Port-Cros, not to Porquerolles, that we had misunderstood him. Once, however, that I had reached Port-Cros, that delectable island, I wished never to leave it. It seems to me to have all the qualities that an island should have. First, a little hotel, the Manoir, where they cook quite well – we were extravagant and had *langouste à l'Armoricaïne*, which, by the way, is the right way of setting down the name of that dish which is usually called *langouste à l'Américaine*. We have the authority of Monsieur Briand, himself a Breton, for that. No doubt some cunning *maître d'hôtel* was responsible for the corruption. The dish is always an expensive one, and I suppose the argument in his mind was that the American visitor would be more likely to

order it if it were coupled in some way with his home country. All the same, it is an error of old standing. I recall that at the reception given to the Colonial Premiers by the late Lord Northcliffe, then Alfred Harmsworth, in Berkeley Square on the eve of the Diamond Jubilee, for which Joseph journeyed over from the rue Marivaux to plan and superintend the cooking of the supper, the cold chicken dish, the peculiarity of which was a sauce almost identical in its qualities with that of the *langouste à l'Armoricaine*, was described as *à l'Américaine*. In *A Book of Food* Mr. Morton Shand deals with this point. He writes, it is true, of the *homard*, the lobster, but in the argument it matters not at all whether one deals with the lobster or the *langouste*, the cray-fish. *Homard à l'Américaine*, he says, 'is a mere corruption in the vulgar mouth, which has parlous little Latin in these days, of *Homard à l'Armoricaine*, and Armorica, as we learnt at school, was the name of the old Roman province of Gaul which roughly corresponds with the former duchy of Brittany. Let us render unto Brittany things that are Breton'. I prefer my assumption – it better exposes the quick wit of the *maître d'hôtel*. By the way, I wonder what authority the admirable Mr. John Bellows has for giving 'rock-lobster' as the English equivalent of *langouste*. I in my ignorance supposed that all lobsters were by preference rock-lobsters. Remember that, when you are ordering this dish, whether at Port-Cros or elsewhere, you should give the cook at least forty minutes for its preparation.

But to return to Port-Cros: its lagoon-like harbour immediately puts the untravelled visitor in mind of a South Sea island; its bathing (in a state of nature if you choose) is magnificent; its rocky coast and forests are

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practically deserted; its ancient château is, although uninhabited, unspoiled by the time-spirit.

If your boatman will allow you, after leaving Port-Cros sail round the Ile du Levant. Even land in its chief bay and bathe. There is a perfectly horrible story about this island which you will find in Baring-Gould's *A Book of the Riviera*. The incident in question happened sixty years ago. It is hardly credible.

After Le Lavandou in a mile or two comes La Fossette-Aiguebelle, with an attractive hotel rather high up. Cavalière comes next. Its Grand Hotel – address it at Cap Nègre, par Le Lavandou, Var – is on the beach. The water very quickly deepens and the bathing is of the kind one dreams about. It is a place whose woods suffered terribly in the fires of last season. Then Canadel, a pretty place. I know a young couple who recently spent their honeymoon there, at the Grand Hotel, on the side of the hill. They tell me that it is very comfortable, and that the food is good; and we have the authority of George Meredith for the fact that one is not less interested in food on a honeymoon, although perhaps Richard Feverel's boiled eggs did not try the cook very highly. After Canadel a new creation, Le Rayol, which promises to be very much over-built, but which has a Restaurant-Réserve which looks very attractive. Then Cavalaire and Pardigon (Hotel de Pardigon half a mile from the sea). All these are exquisite, jewels in a setting of forest, rock and burnished sea. At Pardigon, by the way, to introduce unwillingly a discordant note, the newspapers said that a lady paddling – paddling, mind you, not bathing! – was attacked by an octopus, which her companion had to beat off with an umbrella! I wonder! One has heard of

bathers attacked by sharks in Cornwall. Such stories make good 'copy' in the dead season. All the same, the octopus is more than a possibility on all this coast. Unless annoyed it does not 'attack' the human being. To tread on one, for instance, is to 'annoy' it, but that is not very likely. I have never encountered an octopus myself in the sea, and I find that the idea that they would gratuitously 'attack' bathers made the fishermen laugh. In these seas it is generally small, with a body, apart from the tentacles, of, say, the size of a girl's fist. The only large ones I have come across in the neighbourhood were in the Aquarium at Monaco. Three I have actually seen caught – at Monte Carlo – one from just beneath the Quai de Plaisance, the others twenty yards east of the Hotel Pistonato along that stretch of new road that, leaving the Port, runs toward Larvotto, the bathing-place. A youth of the neighbourhood flung a baited string over the parapet and waited. He felt the octopus and pulled quickly. It clung to its prey and he had it over the parapet before it could release its tentacles. The third occasion was more bloody. I joined a group of spectators who, leaning over the parapet, were watching something on the rocks beneath. A Monégasque in shorts and a singlet wading knee-deep in crystal water. He too dangled a baited string, this time over a small hole the size of a child's foot. Suddenly some quiver at the mouth of the hole must have told him what he wanted to know. He turned and called up in Italian to one of the spectators. A short stick was thrown to him, a stick which had at one end a hook. Quickly he pushed it into the hole, turned and withdrew it. An octopus as large as a tea-cup struggled for a moment in the clear water, writhing its

tentacles, which must have been at least seven inches long; an obscene spectacle. Lifted from the water, the eight-limbed horror seized at once on the man's arm. He, in no way disturbed, lifted it to his mouth – and bit its head off, and then, after subjecting it to some ordeal with a tennis ball, threw it on to the rock where it continued to writhe, as a worm writhes, a worm from the pit indeed. It writhed so much that the man seized it again and bit off the ends of two of its tentacles. Pfui! After that it was quieter. The fisherman continued his sport or trade, taking the baited string and passing to another hole.

As in the day when Tobias Smollett travelled hereabouts, the people of all this coast make 'a delicious ragout' of these monsters, but I have only once seen it figure on a bill of fare and that was at a cheap restaurant at Antibes. No doubt on the evening when I saw octopus caught in front of the Pistonato, *poulpe* was offered to the patrons of the small near-by restaurants. It makes good eating. I know for I have eaten it, fried, on the slopes of Vesuvius.

Few people give enough time to the little villages of the Maures coast and to the country behind them. If you drive or walk by the road which follows the coast you miss much that the railway will show you; if you go by the train, then you are kept to one level and miss the curves, the backward and forward views, of the climbing, turning, descending road. Ultimately, cutting off much of the coast, whether you travel by road or by rail, you reach, through a countryside of vineyards, the Gulf of St. Tropez, leaving St. Tropez itself, the centre of the cork-making industry, on the right; Beauvallon, where there is both a golf course and a Golf Hotel, and which is,

according to the guide-book, becoming 'an English literary centre' (this makes one curious!); Ste. Maxime (where the author of *La garçonne* lives), St. Aygulf – to be mentioned again directly – and, later, Fréjus. . . . In all this country grows the *bruyère*, which is the Mediterranean heath. In parts it attains a respectable height, and from its roots pipes are made, 'briar' being a mistaken corruption of *bruyère*. By the way, the Mediterranean heath is not an essential of the pipe-making trade; I have just seen factories at St. Claude, near the Col de la Faucille, the pass that takes one through the Jura toward Geneva. Its inland heath is surely not Mediterranean?

A further interest of the Maures is that its uplifted mass is so very different from the limestone formation of which we have seen so much since we left Marseilles and from the mass of higher hills, the Estérel, which come next as we follow the coast. The Maures is granite and schist; the Estérel is porphyry of extraordinary reds. Let me quote from Baring-Gould's *A Book of the Riviera* which is very good about all this neighbourhood: 'The Estérel porphyry is red as if on fire, seen in the evening sun. The mica schist of the Montagnes des Maures strews about its dust, so shining, so golden, that in 1792 a representative of the Department went up to Paris with a handful, to exhibit to the Convention as a token of the ineptitude of the Administration of Var, that trampled underfoot treasures sufficient to defray the cost of a war against all the kings of the earth.'

The Maures in the names of these mountains are Moors, Saracens. Here on these hills were their last strongholds. One may still see the meagre remains of Le Grand Fraxinet, their principal fortress in these parts.

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Among their other fortresses was Le Petit Fraxinet on Cap de St. Hospice between Nice and Beaulieu.

But I find that I am leaving the Maures without giving more than a line to the chief of the Iles d'Hyères, Porquerolles. More people visit it than visit Port-Cros, and I suppose the easiest way is to go to it by boat from the Toulon neighbourhood. Trying myself to reach it, as I have said, from Le Lavandou, I did not succeed, although from that village a small excursion steamer makes a fairly regular job of it in the summer. I fancy Porquerolles is becoming a little too popular. I met in the train that took me back to Paris last Easter half a dozen girls, medical students, who had gone straight to the island from their hospital in London, with small suitcases, and had passed the two weeks of their April holiday swimming in its waters and sunning themselves on its rocks. They had spent so little, so little, and they had enjoyed weather and warmth that an English August would not have equalled. All the same, I am not prepared to believe that Porquerolles has the unspoiled charm of Port-Cros.

At Fréjus we find ourselves back on the high-road of pleasure. The *rapides* which have passed Carnoules and Les Arcs come to Fréjus, and you look out of the window landward just before you reach it and see its very respectable Roman amphitheatre. Fréjus, although it is now a mile from the sea, was a Roman seaport of renown, even a rival to what is now Marseilles. In the height of summer a few years ago I saw a Provençal opera produced in the trembling heat of its amphitheatre – an unforgettable spectacle. Hardly a tourist was in the country audience. The sun beat down. . . . I found myself wishing that those aqueducts, fragments of which are left yet from

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the grandeur that was Rome, would bring water in which I could slake my thirst. In Fréjus is a restaurant which is pleasantly spoken of – at the Hotel Terminus et du Midi; and indeed one might do worse than spend a day of one's time in the immediate neighbourhood. St. Aygulf, for instance, a hamlet a few miles to the westward towards Ste. Maxime, is worth visiting. It has a Grand-Hotel, the proprietor of which, Monsieur Foures, is, when he chooses, a great chef – or so I am told by a very knowledgeable friend. But his hotel is a small one – and cheap.

Tobias Smollett has an interesting paragraph in his *Travels through France and Italy* (in 1765) about the neighbourhood of Fréjus:

'This plain, watered with pleasant streams, and varied with vineyards, cornfields, and meadow-ground, afforded a most agreeable prospect to our eyes, which were accustomed to the sight of scorching sands, rugged rocks, and abrupt mountains, in the neighbourhood of Nice. Although this has much the appearance of a corn-country, I am told it does not produce enough for the consumption of its inhabitants, who are obliged to have annual supplies from abroad,¹ imported at Marseilles. A Frenchman, at an average, eats three times the quantity of bread that satisfies a native of England, and, indeed, it is undoubtedly the staff of his life. I am therefore surprised that the Provençaux do not convert part of their vineyards into cornfields; for they may boast of their wine as they please;

¹ In the War I remember how badly off the Niçois and their neighbours were for corn. What bread they had to put up with! Did not the Mayor of Nice and some of his fellow notables pay a special visit to Paris to plead for a greater share of grain, fearful of what would happen if their people were not better fed?

but that which is drank by the common people, not only here, but also in all the wine countries of France, is neither so strong, nourishing, nor, in my opinion, so pleasant to the taste as the small beer of England. It must be owned that all the peasants who have wine for their ordinary drink are of a diminutive size, in comparison of those who use milk, beer, or even water; and it is a constant observation, that when there is a scarcity of wine, the common people are always more healthy than in those seasons when it abounds. The longer I live, the more I am convinced that wine and all fermented liquors are pernicious to the human constitution; and that for the preservation of health and exhilaration of the spirits, there is no beverage comparable to simple water.'

I make the prohibitionists a present of the last sentence! They may like to remember that Smollett wrote 'M.D.' after his name. It and its predecessors make strange reading in these days of poor and very small beer, especially to those of us who like the little wines of the Latin countries.

I feel about St. Raphael, which follows Fréjus, as I feel about Hyères, and about its neighbour, Valescure (which has a golf course), as I feel about Costebelle. Pine woods and sea, sea and pine woods. Good places for invalids, these. By the way, avoid in them the wine called Cavalaire.

All the same, I like to think of Valescure for an excellent story that is told of it and the King of the Belgians. Rooms had been ordered for King Albert at one of its palace hotels. He arrived betimes on a bicycle and with no retinue. A black porter guarded the door of the hotel. To him the king:

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'I am the King of the Belgians. I have ordered rooms —'

'That's good! oh, that's very good!' the black porter answered with laughter, slapping his knee as he spoke; 'And I'm the Emperor of Mexico!'

At St. Raphael I was struck by the appearance of the very new Hotel Napoléon and I lunched cheaply and well near the station at a little restaurant, the Cirelli, in the Boulevard Félix-Martin.

The forests, woods and thickets that run eastward from St. Raphael have in recent years paid heavy toll. Fire has succeeded fire. One could not say whether they were caused by accident or by malice. Oh, but they were dangerous. In an August of three or four years ago I had been by train into Beaulieu from La Napoule to lunch, and returning in mid-afternoon I was aware as I passed towards Cannes of a darkness covering the sky. I looked up from my book. . . . Yes, evidently there was a fire somewhere in the neighbourhood of St. Raphael. At La Napoule I found concern, fear. We ascended its sugar-loaf hill and looked on an advancing army of flame. The wind was high and brought smoke and burning leaves before it. Surely Mandelieu would be devoured. Something near terror seized our group of spectators. One who should have known better said that when the moving furnace had crossed one more valley we should all be suffocated by its fumes. . . . Night fell; the flames seemed almost to ring the village round. The inhabitants rushed to the beach with such of their belongings as they could carry, took boat and made over the sea towards Cannes. But the wind changed, the flames died down, La Napoule was saved. That beauty of forest had surely gone for ever? Not so. The luxuriant nature of the South

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seems already to have forgotten its ordeal. The fire had leapt the railway line near Agay and had come near to the water's edge. Houses had been burned in the village street. A life or two or three had been lost. . . . Yet last spring one could hardly see a trace of the conflagration. But there are plenty of traces now. The spring and early summer months of 1927 were very dry in all this country and, with August, fires broke out almost daily – near Cannes, near Nice, above Monte Carlo, and, most seriously, at Théoule and (once more) at La Napoule. The main railway line was in danger and traffic along the Corniche d'Or – the seaside road under the Estérel – was stopped, the tar on the roadway having caught fire. Let me be frank and say that, passing along the line in mid-September, I came to the conclusion that these fires had been exaggerated, or had at least produced an exaggerated effect on the minds of simple readers like myself. I had not then seen the devastation under the Maures nor noticed the harm that had been done near Le Trayas. On September 14 the *Times* correspondent wrote that the amount of timber destroyed represented a value of at least £100,000. Much simple heroism was shown during these days of fire. There exist in the forest look-out stations from which the men in charge can signal the breaking out and progress of fires. In one of them they continued to send signals until the flames were already licking the walls of the station and then they only retired into the cellar in order to return and continue their work directly the wave of fire had passed.¹

¹ On his way back to England in May, 1765, Smollett wrote from Aix-en-Provence: 'The mountain of Esterelles, which, in one of my former letters, I described as a most romantic and noble plantation of evergreens,

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After leaving St. Raphael the fast train does not stop until it reaches Cannes. One descends at St. Raphael therefore for Agay and all the little settlements of the Corniche d'Or that shelter so happily under the Estérel. The inn at Agay was a place I loved. I came there once with Sir Hugh Lane¹ and Mr. Theodore Dreiser. The author of *An American Tragedy* has something to say of Agay in his *A Traveller at Forty*.² We drank *vin du pays*, ate *langouste*, and went early to bed. Lane was sure that this life on the seashore was so much healthier than that he had known so well in so many successive years at Nice and Monte Carlo. We would stop here a fortnight, he said. Yes, these bedrooms paved with red tiles were primitive and delightful. The valley that ran up into the mountains, with its murmuring stream, its violets, its banks of meadowland, was surely a Devon valley. Dreiser looked on. . . . After two days Lane thought that, after

trees, shrubs, and aromatic plants, is at present quite desolate. Last summer, some execrable villains set fire to the pines, when the wind was high. It continued burning for months, and the conflagration extended above ten leagues, consuming an incredible quantity of timber. The ground is now naked on each side of the road, or occupied by the black trunks of the trees, which have been scorched without falling. They stand as so many monuments of the judgment of heaven, filling the mind with horror and compassion. I could hardly refrain from shedding tears at this dismal spectacle, when I recalled the idea of what it was about eighteen months ago.'

¹ I tried to draw a picture of Sir Hugh Lane in his Rivieran habit in the character of Sir Peter Bain in *Caviare*.

² 'The character of the world in which Agay was located was delicious. After the raw and cold of our last few days in Paris this satin atmosphere of moonlight and perfume was wonderful. We stepped out of a train at the little beach station of this summer coast to find the trees in full leaf and great palms extending their wide fronds into the warm air. . . .' Mr. Dreiser does his best for Agay over several pages. The 'Sir Scorp' of *A Traveller at Forty* was yet another picture of Hugh Lane.

all, we should find as much fresh air and rocks that fell to an even wilder sea if we went on to Cap Martin. . . .

And, unless you too are fretting for the promenades of Cannes and Nice or the Rooms at Monte Carlo, you can still stop at Agay in some more modern hotel, or at Le Trayas (Estérel-Hotel, high up; or the Hotel Restaurant-Réserve du Trayas, on the rocks of the coast), or at Théoule, which, being round the corner, looks on Cannes, and thank the Fates every fresh morning for the beauty of the world. I have stopped at no one of these places myself but I have lunched, in discriminating company, at the Réserve du Trayas and have been much pleased. There are paths in the hills, and roads on which to drive. You should, if you are active, climb to the summit of the Rastel d'Agay. Such a view! Walk round Cap Dramont too, and the Pointe de la Baumette. It is fair to say, in addition, that from the train you see that golden stretch of coast, its red rocks, its clear water, almost as well as from the road. Perhaps too you are safer in the train. The sharp curves on the road are cruel.

After leaving Agay the visitor from the North really begins to realize what the Riviera means. Soon after passing Le Trayas the train plunges into a tunnel. We emerge and see Cannes before us across the bay. First Théoule. Then La Napoule with its surprising Château. There follow now the signs of a more complicated civilization. A sea-front, breached here and there, if it is early in the season, by the fury of the waves. Yes, one cannot be sure of the weather. Why, I have known a novelist, seeking solitude for his work, driven from Agay in March by a snowstorm; and I myself have seen snow thick on the ground at Antibes in December. I

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have looked down on Monte Carlo from the garden of the Riviera Palace Hotel and have watched it whitening into an inch-depth of hail, hail-stones as big as walnuts. That was in March.

But you do not believe in the possibility of such things if you look at Cannes across its blue sea on a smiling February morning.

To retrace our steps for a moment. At the time that I add this note, in October, 1927, the Coast of the Maures is, particularly in respect to its eastern stretches, furiously building and 'town-planning'. Prices have soared and much of its charm will be lost. See these hills and beaches before they are ruined. The neighbourhood of the new Le Rayol is the chief centre of exploitation. That of Le Lavandou promises to be far less spoiled. Le Lavandou is artless. It was here that I saw them treading out the grapes, or rather that I saw one man engaged in that romantic operation. He wore boots, but no socks. The boots were of black leather and looked as if they had been a bargain in one of the Strand shops. They were unlaced. Every two or three minutes he would pause to open a trap-door in the floor of the shed in which he worked and would sweep the mess of juice, of skins and stalks into some lower chamber. . . . I am prepared to observe happily the treading of the grapes with bare feet, but surely black boots are unseemly. A week or two later I had a postcard from Mr. Morton Shand: 'The vintage in full swing in glorious Autumn sunshine on the Montagne de Reims to-day was a glorious sight.' I am sure that the peasants of Champagne did not wear black boots! And, by the way, it was on the walk from Le Lavandou to

Cavalière that I saw on the wall of a little villa the following engaging if slightly equivocal sentence: 'La montée qu'conduit à la maison d'un ami est une descente.' The author, one Kaddour, should produce a little book of friendly epigrams.

A word of warning should be given motorists about the road which runs round the Coast of the Maures. Be certain that your car is a strong one. Watch for obstacles in the road. In December, 1927, motoring from Dinard to Monte Carlo, my host chose this coast road which he did not know. 'Was it good?' he asked the Le Lavandou hotel-keeper. 'Not bad, not so very bad,' he was answered. The 'not so very bad' included a twenty-foot-deep and thirty-feet-across hole in the road as it runs into Ste. Maxime. In the dusk we saw by good luck a felled tree across our path. A tree blown down, we supposed, and proceeded to circumvent it, since there was no indication of danger beyond. However, in attempting the circumvention we had to go on the railroad and, fortunately, we stuck in coal-dust. Otherwise we should have plunged into the hole, and so would the car which followed us. A bridge had fallen in three weeks before, and, apparently, the hotels and garages on neither side had been warned! We had to wind fifty sixty kilometres out of our way through the hills. No wonder the *Eclaireur* had articles soon after on 'Le Scandale de la Côte des Maures'! It dealt with the state of the roads.

THE RIVIERA'S DETRACTORS

LET me pause here for a while to deal with those defects, those disadvantages, of the Riviera of which its critics make so much. I hope I may remember them all. Most of them are, in essentials, so very unimportant. Most dangerous of the critics, I fancy, is one 'W. W.' in the *New Statesman* – not Wilfred Whitten, I take it, but possibly an essayist who usually employs initials that come later in the alphabet. Anyhow, this writer's wit and cleverness make him extremely amusing. Indeed, his article, 'The Riviera Ramp', is so entertaining that I would exchange a wet day in Nice, let us say, for the pleasure of reading such another. His indictment resolves itself into this: he came to the Riviera a year ago in a season in which the weather was bad and when the sudden rise in the value of the franc had made prices uncertain and unsatisfactory, and at a time when the Anglo-Saxon was not very popular with his erstwhile ally. 'W. W.' grumbles at the varying temperature; 'the fact is that *our* sun is too warm,' he made one of his 'locals' say; and he suffers from 'Riviera sore throat'. Well, as I have said, the weather cannot entirely be depended upon. Neither can it be in New York nor London nor Paris. But what you can depend upon is weeks together of unbroken sunny weather at varying intervals all through the short space of winter.¹ If it rains, well, it rains, a very wet rain; it

¹ There is something of a mystery about Smollett's record of his experience with the Rivieran weather in 1765. Thus he writes from Nice on January 4, 1765: 'There is less rain and wind at Nice than in any other part

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may rain or look like rain for a day, two, three, four days; and then one wakes and finds that the sun has made its insistent way through all the curtains and shutters of the windows, and, stepping out of bed, one stands for a few minutes on the balcony and watches the fishermen shoot-

of the world that I know; and such is the serenity of the air, that you see nothing above your head for several months together but a charming blue expanse, without cloud or speck.' That is all very definite and clear. But on April 2 of the same year he writes: 'Neither I, nor any person in this country, could foresee the rainy weather that prevailed *from the middle of November till the twentieth of March*' – the italics are mine. 'In this short period of four months,' he goes on, 'we have had fifty-six days of rain, which I take to be a greater quantity than generally falls during the six worst months of the year in the county of Middlesex, especially as it was for the most part a heavy, continued rain. The south winds generally predominate in the wet season in Nice; but this winter the rain was accompanied with every wind that blows, except the south; though the most frequent were those that came from the east and north quarters. Notwithstanding these great rains, such as were never known at Nice in the memory of man, the intermediate days of fair weather were delightful, and the ground seemed perfectly dry. The air itself was perfectly free from moisture. Though I lived upon a ground-floor, surrounded on three sides by a garden, I could not perceive the least damp either on the floors or the furniture; neither was I much incommoded by the asthma, which used always to harass me most in wet weather.' Remember that Smollett was a medical man. This gives point to what he says on the page from which I take the first of the above extracts, a passage all the more interesting to me as I have always believed myself to have found Nice to be very exciting to the nerves: 'The air of Nice has had a still more sensible effect upon Mr. Sc – z, who laboured under nervous complaints to such a degree that life was a burden to him. . . . He was advised to come hither; and the success of his journey has greatly exceeded his expectation. Though the weather has been remarkably bad for this climate, he has enjoyed perfect health. . . . He eats heartily, sleeps well, is in high spirits, and so strong, that he is never off his legs in the daytime.' Belfort Bax, who lived for many years at No. 11, rue St. Philippe, held Smollett's view about the air of Nice and its effects on the nerves. By the way, considering his services to the study of French history, I suggest to the Nice authorities that it would be a graceful act on their part to re-name the rue St. Philippe the rue Belfort Bax.

ing their nets in the blue water, or the gardeners busy about the plants, the perfume of whose flowers shall rise upward and greet you before the week is at an end. They tell me that you cannot be sure of constant winter sun nearer than Egypt – but it is one of the advantages of the Riviera that Egypt is only a very few days away. Why, you can go off there from Monte Carlo in the *Mauretania* or the *Lapland* or the *Empress of France* and see the Pyramids and all those tombs and yet be back again within a fortnight. You will find you have missed a great many amusing parties during your absence and that not so many people have remarked that absence. . . . There was an old chap, Sam Lewis, a money-lender who used to preside at the receipt of custom in Cork Street, in the room with the big bow-window on the left-hand side as you walk northward. He sat there and lent money to the men he was quite sure would pay him back. Well, Sam Lewis was a frequenter of the Riviera. His vice was gambling. He got through on the green tables of Monte Carlo more than a bit of the money he took away from the young men who figure in ‘Debrett’. He played in maximums, but even so he left two or three million pounds at his death. One day Sam Lewis was grumbling at the weather and at the same time punting against a run at trente-et-quarante. He lost perhaps a dozen of his stakes – the maximum was worth four hundred and eighty pounds, say twenty-four hundred dollars, in those days! – and suddenly he also lost his patience. ‘Ere, I’ve had enough of this,’ he said, getting up; ‘I’m through with trente-et-quarante, yes, and with Monte Carlo too; I’m off to Rome.’ And he went – that very afternoon.

Four days later, Lord Rosslyn, I think it was, saw

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him in his old seat at the tables. 'Why, I thought you'd gone to Rome,' he said. Sam Lewis looked at him, and, as he put out his hand to withdraw the twelve thousand francs he'd just won, he made a short answer: 'Yes, I've been to Rome. Just back. Say, you can 'ave Rome!'

The people who try after several years to break with the Riviera generally come to some such conclusion.

All the same, when you go South, if it be in the late winter season that I have been recommending, take with you warm clothes as well as cool. You are likely to want that fur coat and those heavy jumpers. However, I know women who stubbornly refused before their journey to provide themselves in London or in Paris with thin blouses and cool frocks. They found it difficult in the fog and rain and cold of Bond Street and the rue de la Paix to believe in the possibility of a summer sun only a few hours away, and I have known them, arriving at their hotels in the midst of a really fine spell, spend a few days in seclusion while those gaps in their wardrobes were filled, rather than be seen in public in the only clothes with which they had provided themselves.

Yes, and these same people who tell you that the Riviera weather is always uncertain and generally inclement will tell you with equal conviction that whatever you do you must not subject children to the softening effect of a winter in the South, that their young constitutions must not be weakened by the sweetness of the Riviera climate but hardened by the rigor of the North! Certainly little children and big do not have a very good time down there. The place is not constructed for them. The Monte Carlo people have given up a corner of the Terrasse to the

younger ones, have set up swings and see-saws and laid down some sand — but it is a pallid business.

The true truth is that the Coast of Pleasure being some eight hundred miles south of London it does give one all the advantages which one may properly expect. There have been plenty of Christmas Days on which one sat on the Promenade des Anglais at Nice and drank iced lemonade before lunch. The London and Paris papers make rather good reading at such a time: fog, blizzards, rain, the prospects of skating, hunting stopped, no racing! Is it such a great discomfort that you have an overcoat over the back of your chair? You are likely to want it some time in the day; indeed, an overcoat is essential in the early months of the year if you are likely to be out during the actual hour of sunset. And remember that when the cold weather does come, although it may not stay long, it comes with a rush. I was bathing myself at Monte Carlo and sunning myself on the beach for an hour or two after bathing at the beginning of November, 1927, but on the 16th of that same month I had a letter from the same place: 'To-day is lovely but cold. . . . We had to buy a couple of electric heaters as we were freezing. . . . I am writing this on the Terrace as it is the warmest place in Monte Carlo and still it is not warm enough to sit very long.' At that date in 1764 in Smollett's record there was a north wind, with mizzling rain all night. That was in Nice.

The Riviera is being over-built. Quite true. It is. It is being terribly over-built. Every year sees this passion for eating up the open spaces growing stronger.

The Riviera is vulgar, purse-proud, too crowded,

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swarming with too many rich people and too many relatively poor ones. Yes, and so is London, and Paris, and New York – and Brighton, and Palm Beach and Deauville and Ramsgate. But you can, so to speak, take a feather broom and brush all the troublesome creatures off the Alpine ledges into the sea: you can close your eyes to them. If the *hôtels de luxe* become more than ordinarily unpleasant to you, the reason may be that you have been eating too much and taking too little exercise. Consequently you can see only double chins, over-florid faces, and protuberant stomachs. Go to La Fossette-Aiguebelle or Corsica or St. Paul for a while. There is no crowded spot on the coast from which you cannot escape in a score of minutes. Try the mountain paths behind La Turbie and Mougins. . . .

The Riviera is unduly expensive. Well, is it? I doubt it. Remember that nearly everything for which you pay has to be brought down from the France that is on the other side of the mountains, or out of Italy; remember the amount of solid capital that has been sunk in providing you with those generally splendid roads and all those luxuries; remember that service costs more to-day than it did as well as material, the service for which you don't pay in tips – the cooks, for instance.¹ Truth is that the Riviera caters for all purses: you can live quite decently on ten shillings a day and you can live on four pounds.

¹ Cooks have been a difficulty on the Riviera for many years. In 1764 Smollett remarks: 'It is very difficult to find a tolerable cook at Nice. A common maid, who serves the people of the country for three or four livres a month, will not live with an English family under eight or ten. They are all slovenly, slothful, and unconscionable cheats.' I must say that many of my friends have been quite happy in their experience.

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Say two and a half dollars on the one hand and twenty on the other. You can pay fifteen francs for your dinner, quite a decent dinner in its modest way, at the Bœuf à la Mode, five minutes away from the Monte Carlo Casino, in the Avenue de la Costa, or you can pay two hundred at the Hotel de Paris or Ciro's. And what is true of Monte Carlo is true of Nice and Cannes. The Bœuf à la Mode dinner included on the day of my visit among other things fish and roast chicken. Your host at that smart restaurant a hundred yards away might not have thought of anything more original with which to satisfy your appetite. One does get rather tired of chicken, even the best chicken. And if you say that you didn't come all the way from home to eat a simple dinner in a back street, then I will answer that every new experience broadens the mind; it is likely to be a new experience to dine remarkably well in Monte Carlo for less than half a crown or sixty-two cents. The other sort of Rivieran hôtelier should remember, however, that there is such a thing as killing the goose; so should the various Administrations. They charge you too much for your subscriptions, for instance. The Coast of Pleasure has rivals nowadays and it is certainly true that one does meet a great many Rivieran habitués who say they can no longer afford its prices. Perhaps they lumped in with their expenses the money they lost at trente-et-quarante, baccarat, chemin-de-fer, roulette – and boule, and have got their results all wrong in consequence!

'A London Girl' deplored in an English paper recently the old ladies who come in such numbers to the South – 'old and unattached ladies of Great Britain who swarm

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in thousands . . . plain, flat-footed, badly dressed, disappointed women, who come out to end their days in the sun.' Well, why not? There is room for all in these scores of villages and small towns and in the less fashionable ways of Nice and Cannes. Besides, some of these old ladies are duchesses – and some of them are million-



‘FLAT-FOOTED ENGLISH LADIES’

aires. On the Riviera you can be sure of nothing less than of appearances.

Monsieur Paul Morand is a critic who in the modern fashion has turned against his own family. Writing for the American *Dial* a year ago, he proclaimed boldly that ‘the French Riviera has certainly become one of the most repellent things on earth: it is noisy and dusty, the large estates have been split up, and there are many suburban

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villas'. I believe the author of *Ouvert la Nuit* to be wrong. Perhaps he has been betrayed into this violence by his translator.

For my own part I find that the most unpleasant sight on all the Riviera is the English tourist who wears 'plus-fours'.



'PLUS-FOURS'

VII

BY ROAD TO THE RIVIERA

THE TIMES calmly remarked last winter that 'all motoring on the Riviera is dangerous'. Perhaps so. Most pleasant things are dangerous – women and wine and



'ALL MOTORING ON THE RIVIERA IS DANGEROUS'

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games of chance and the waves of the sea. There is a huge population of motorists down there and really the percentage of accident is not as high as one might expect. The roads twist in and out. There are hairpin bends, whole series of them, and unprotected precipices. However, Mr. John Prioleau, who knows, calls the roads 'superb', 'beautifully made, with never a gradient to call for more than half-open throttle'. All motorists are not equally careful of what they may meet round the corner; the tram-cars that run about hugging the pavement are simply a damned nuisance – I have been caught by one of them myself: it twisted round the bend out of St. Jean without ringing its bell and my host's uninsured Napier, chauffeur-driven, was all crumpled up. And it will take, I suppose, another generation before the Italian peasant coming out of Lombardy with his string of vegetable carts will learn to keep to his own side of the road. Still it is simply true that one does not motor the Rivieran roads with one's heart in one's mouth. In effect they are no worse than, say, the Mantes road out of Paris on a fine Saturday afternoon in June, or the Bath Road near Maidenhead, or the roads on Long Island.

Nevertheless, I, being no great shakes as a motorist, have so far hesitated to drive a car either to or in the Riviera. It is true that I have achieved the darling ambition of being driven in great (and leisurely) comfort to the South, but I was allowed by my host to choose much of the route and the stopping-places and I jealously guarded the privilege of helping in the choice of the meals. . . .

The roads through Central France are getting better every year, and although I have seen for myself how

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crowded with pot-holes some of them are, yet I have also seen the plans that were being made for their immediate improvement. Of course, you may run into really bad weather between Boulogne or Havre and the Corniche. Floods, for instance, to say nothing of snow. But the risk is worth it. Read Lord Montagu of Beaulieu (the other Beaulieu, the one in the New Forest): 'The pleasure of going to the South largely consists in going by road and taking your own car there. . . . No one knows France who has not gone to the South by road.' I pause at this quotation to suggest that there is an excellent alternative to a car. Shanks's mare. It is a long way, of course, to go on one's two legs. Call it a thousand miles – allowing for all the detours you will want to make – and be done with it. A thousand miles; sixty days. I never knew a man who did it, but I did know one who walked what the tramps call 'the *Grand Rayon*' – the high-road from Marseilles to Paris. But he was a teacher, a man wedded to patience by his trade, a scholar too, a man who thought and so had occupation for his mind. You will observe that I do not mention the possibility of doing the journey on an ordinary bicycle, because, in spite of Mr. C. L. Freeston's capable book on cycling in the Alps, I fancy that you run considerable risk of damaging your heart if you try to travel some of the French hills on a machine which you have to propel with the strength of your own body.

To return: Lord Montagu suggests various roads. One from Havre through Blois, Limoges, Brive, Toulouse (where I hear talk of the Restaurant Tivollier) and Avignon avoids both Paris and Marseilles. Another is from Boulogne to Beauvais, Paris, Melun – a short detour,

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very much worth making in the spring or autumn, will show you Barbizon and take you through the Forest of Fontainebleau – Moulins, St. Etienne, Valence (Hotel Europe, I am told) and Avignon. You can go from Havre to Paris – how beautiful that route is in the fruit-flowering time! – and then by Sens (the beauty of the cathedral makes it essential that you should pull up here) to Dijon (where, as I have said, you should eat *chez* Racouchot) or Autun (Monsieur Bonneau will see to it that you are made comfortable at the St. Louis), Macon (Hotel Europe), Bourg (stop at the Europe and whatever you do do not forget the Church of Brou with its tombs; I do not remind you to eat a Bresse chicken because it will arrive automatically on your table), Grenoble, Digne (Miss Meg Villars recommends the Hotel de Grand Paris, perhaps because of its *paté de grèves des Alpes*) and Grasse.

A writer in the *Morning Post* votes for the route by Fontainebleau (which is too near Paris for you to want to eat there, or I would recommend the Savoy, if it is not over-splendid for your taste), Lyons (eat, of course, at the Restaurant Fillioux at 73 rue Duquesne even though it is a little out of the way and though *la mère* Fillioux has gone on her long journey. Should you have time for a second meal I recommend Sorret on the Quai de Retz; I notice with satisfaction that G. B. Stern in *Bouquet* endorses my own appreciation of the Pouilly Fuissé *en carafe* – Mr. Charles Cammell introduced me both to restaurant and wine), Valence and Avignon, where, he says, ‘a stay of several days can be made, as comfortable hotels provide the necessary *pied-à-terre*’. Yes, a stay can be, indeed should be, made there, but I have not myself experienced the existence of the com-

fortable hotels – nor of the good Provençal cooking of which other people have told me – at least as far as Avignon is concerned. There was, a few years ago, a campaign in Paris to advertise the cooking of Provence in general and of Avignon in particular. I contributed my mite to the discussion:

I had been disputing, I said, the possibility of finding really good cookery in the town of the Popes. To please a Provençal friend, who maintained that I had been unfortunate in my experiences, I promised to spend a night in Avignon on the way home and to write beforehand to a certain hotel to tell them to prepare a little dinner which must have the quality of being altogether of the region or at least of Provence. I arrived. ‘I am the monsieur’, I proclaimed in my bad French, ‘who has ordered a little dinner *tout-à-fait* Provençal.’ ‘*Mais oui, Monsieur, par-faitement.*’ I was ushered to the dining-room, and a fly-spotted menu was put before me by an elderly servitor in carpet slippers. ‘This is a mistake,’ I protested, after looking at it. The card promised an uninteresting consommé, a dull fish from the Mediterranean, fried mutton cutlets and something else that combined to suggest a meal at one of the English chain-hotels: ‘This is a mistake; I was to have a Provençal dinner.’ The servitor protested that it was a Provençal dinner, a dinner *tout-à-fait* Provençal. Perhaps it was; and it was, apart from the name of the sea out of which the fish had been pulled, a dinner *tout-à-fait* English too. However, I would make up for it by drinking the wine of the Rhone, Hermitage red and white, Chateaneuf du Pape, and so on. The list was very moderate in its prices. I experimented the while a rat ran to and fro; he at least had a very Provençal air.

The bill came. The wines which had been so reasonable had been trebled in price. I protested. Much discussion; much consultation on the other side of the door. And then: 'Ah, pardon, Monsieur, by accident you were given a wine-list of last season.' The next day I experimented in a rather ambitious restaurant of the town, Hiély's, new and near the gate of the Palace. Fair, but hardly enough on which to build up a gastronomic reputation for Avignon. . . . As I have been writing this book I have heard of a new hotel, the Dominion.

That very safe guide, the aforementioned Mr. John Prioleau, seems to agree with me about Avignon ('I do not propose to stop again at Avignon') and suggests going South by Havre, Evreux, Chartres, Orleans, Bourges, Montluçon, where he says you are not to stay (I agree with him), Clermont-Ferrand (the Hotel de la Poste is better to sleep in than to dine in; eat at the Univers and drink Corent and Chanturgue), Le Puy, where you are not to stay in winter, Alais, Nimes, and Brignoles, where he recommends you to stay at a 'splendid' place, the Château Tivoli: I do not find the Château Tivoli in my guide-book; but Miss Villars recommends the Hotel Garrus, which I do find. Mr. Prioleau added up the record of one journey to the South and back: 'Do not expect smooth going all the way, but the journey *is* worth it.' And elsewhere he says: 'The main thing is to cross those wonderful mountains which slope down to the Rhone Valley, in daylight, not only for your safety's sake, but because the drive is one which you will never forget for its astounding beauty. Remember that the run between Le Puy and Alais will take you at the very least four or even five hours; and remember also to carry

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food with you. I do not recommend the pickled donkey which appears to be one of the local gastronomic successes.' If you take this last route you see marvellous church architecture at Evreux, Chartres and Bourges. In yet another place Mr. Prioleau (nowadays I recognize him at once by his style) recommends the route by Havre, Rouen (for lunch try the Hotel de la Couronne, the birth-place of the *caneton Rouennais*. You must give hours to Rouen, to its churches. Hours? Well, say a long morning – or a week. By the way, this and other comments elsewhere in the book on hotels, food and so on are my own, unless otherwise attributed), Evreux, Chartres, Fontainebleau, Auxerre (Hotel de l'Epée, where last summer they had some excellent Chateaufort du Pape, although I confess I was not convinced of the propriety of drinking a Rhone wine on the northern threshold of Burgundy. It is essential not to leave Auxerre, which Walter Pater held to be the prettiest town in France, without seeing it from the other side of the river, preferably just before sunset, and without seeing its thirteenth-century Cathedral with its stained glass, and what remains of its Abbey Church; the picture of the stoning of St. Stephen in the left aisle of St. Etienne's struck me as a very pleasant piece of painting: I wish actively to see it again), Avallon (which, with its very neighbouring Vézelay, is a revelation in itself and insists on a pause), Chalons-sur-Saone (people I respect recommend highly the Hotel Europe; G. B. Stern is lyrical in her praise of its kitchen; the *patron*, Monsieur Burtin, was chef to the Kaiser), Lyons, Tournon, Valence, Orange and Avignon – 'it is well within the capabilities of a medium-powered car to get from the Channel to Cannes by the end of the fifth

day, without driving much in the dark or in too great a hurry'. Perhaps Mr. Prioleau understates his case. I have a young friend of twenty-three, a motor-car fan. In July, 1927, he bought a second-hand Citroën coupé in Great Portland Street for twenty-five pounds. At the moment of writing (October, 1927), he has arrived at Monte Carlo. He started from Boulogne about two o'clock one day; spent that night, having lost his way, in his car near Compiègne; got as far, the next day, as Dijon, having had to buy a new tyre *en route*; slept there in his car, and, starting at 5.30 a.m., before sunrise, reached Monte Carlo by midnight. I must lay stress on the twenty-five pounds and on the fact that his last stage, from Dijon to Monte Carlo, was about four hundred and forty miles. Twenty-five pounds! I did not see him that night. He slept once again in his car. But, the next morning, he bore no trace of fatigue. . . .

I should myself give a clear week to the journey, but then I like looking at things. How much you miss if you have not given yourself time to get out of the car and examine the places that promise to be worth remembering – Vezelay and Avallon, for instance! After all, a journey should be punctuated by other interests than eating, drinking and sleeping. There is the church architecture. So many motorists pass beauty by in ignorance of its existence.

Yet I may be allowed to say that when I plan my ideal tour to the Mediterranean I shall be disappointed if I find it impossible to include for meals two places not far apart – Chablis and Beaune. Chablis partly for the sake of drinking its white wines on the spot: I should write beforehand to Monsieur Bergerand at the Etoile and

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order my meal – or rather I should leave the ordering to him, merely suggesting a *fondue de poulet à la crème*, with the addition of truffles. I should add that I did not want many dishes, but I should ask that they might be from his own hand, and I should drink with them a succession of Chablis wines that my palate might be happily educated. At Beaune I should eat at the Poste, and I should have as one of the dishes, if I had not had something of the kind at Chablis, *écrevisses à la crème* in spite of the difficulty of eating it under the eyes of the world. *Il faut souffrir pour bien manger*. For the wines I should leave myself in the hands of Monsieur Chevillot, drinking both white and red. Of course, I realize as I write that this stopping at Chablis and at Beaune is a counsel of perfection. They are very close to one another. And there is Dijon! I could not with propriety omit Dijon and a meal *chez* Racouchot. How could I get in all three of them? There is only one way out of the difficulty, to spend two nights at Dijon – at the Cloche, where they have a new wing and up-to-date bathrooms – and to go from it to lunch at Chablis and Beaune, making a point of passing through Semur, worth looking at for its beauty and interesting as the birthplace of Salmasius, who, I am credibly informed, showed more learning than any other man who ever lived. I should do the Cloche the compliment of dining there the second night. I should order *brochet Dijonnais* in particular, the *brochet* being our friend the pike.

In a memorable fortnight during 1927 in Burgundy the best wine we drank was a Romanée 1906, and that was at the Cloche. But what can have happened to all the old Burgundies? They cannot all have been bought by the

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Belgians! Whatever the cause, they have vanished from the wine lists of Burgundian restaurants and hotels. They tell me that you will find them only in the private cellars of the wine growers themselves, and to woo them thence to the table is a matter requiring infinite discretion. One other point: I do not myself think – and that although it was cooked for us at the Chateaubriant by that famous Dijonnais chef, Monsieur Bony himself – that that Burgundy stew of river fish, *la pauchouse*, is worth making so much fuss about. Frankly, I prefer a really good *matelote* of eels. Monsieur Bony cooked us the best snails I ever ate – but he took trouble to get us the very best of their kind, which was, no doubt, half the battle. I may cite Mr. A. E. Housman as a witness to the excellence of Monsieur Bony's *soupe à l'oignon*.

I remember: Who am I to express an opinion about wines in this chapter? An enthusiast, yes, but very unlearned. Rather let me recommend on this noble subject *A Book of French Wines*, by P. Morton Shand, who wrote *A Book of Food* and, if you can get hold of a copy, *Nouveau Manuel de l'Amateur de Bourgogne*, by Maurice des Ombliaux, who wrote *L'Art de Manger et son Histoire*.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT AND SEVERAL
OTHERS

EXPERIENCE tells me that for the normal visitor to take a lot of books with him to the Coast of Pleasure is a very vain thing. Yet I have never been able to break myself of the habit of carrying as many as I can conveniently put into a large handbag (if you are economically minded you will always distribute those heavy things, books and boots, in the baggage you destine for the rack of your compartment!), and I doubt whether I have ever done more than read a little in any one of them. This generalization must of course be qualified by circumstances. If you are stopping at one of the villages under the Maures, then perhaps you will be able to read; but it is not much use trying to read at Cannes, say, or Nice or Monte Carlo. There are always so many things that you want to do that, before you know it, all your waking hours will be taken up. The same thing is more or less true about writing. Certain novelists do write on the Riviera. Mr. Wells at the back of Cannes; the Baroness Orczy at Monte Carlo; Mr. W. J. Locke at Cannes; Mr. Somerset Maugham at Cap-Ferrat; Mr. Oppenheim at Cagnes. Señor Ibañez worked prodigiously in his pleasaunce at Menton-Garavan. Mr. Henry Arthur Jones used to write plays at La Turbie, from which in twenty minutes he could descend on Monte Carlo and enjoy its gaities. Belfort Bax wrote too little at Nice; Sir Coleridge Kennard writes too little at Cannes. Smollett in the eighteenth century sent very long letters from Nice, but that was a

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very different Nice; in those days he was able to describe La Turbie as 'a considerable town', and Nice itself, although a 'capital' and 'the city of Nice', as 'this little town'. To-day the atmosphere in all these nodal points is too nervous, too restless. It is like being on a great Atlantic liner: one wants to be in all parts of the ship at the same time. If one sits lost in a book in one's allotted deck-chair, then surely one will miss the sight of a whale blowing on the starboard bow, an iceberg somewhere away on the horizon, or a 'tanker' on its rough voyage to Europe. So, if you are reading after dinner in your hotel at Cannes, you will miss the one exciting evening in the Casino, the five poignant minutes of high play that people will talk about for the rest of the season.

Some books, however, you must take with you, and I suggest that they should deal with the country which you are on the way to visit. First in importance comes Smollett's *Travels through France and Italy*, from which I have just quoted; and there is Sir Frederick Treves's *The Riviera of the Corniche Road*; Baring-Gould's *A Book of the Riviera*; Monsieur Henri Chateau's novel (in French) *Le Secret du Docteur Ludus*; Mr. Charles Kingston's *The Romance of Monte Carlo*, and that old-time story, *Dr. Antonio*, by G. D. Ruffini, although it deals rather with the Riviera just over the Italian frontier; yes, and Mr. H. G. Wells's *The World of William Clissold* and his *Meanwhile*, both of which will most certainly act as stimulants.¹ Perhaps, by way of light fiction, dealing more or

¹ Ask the P.L.M. people to send you from 179, Piccadilly, their pamphlet, 'Rambles on the Riviera', which is by no less a hand than that of Sir Martin Conway. It is a good example of intelligent publicity. And you will be lucky if you can add to your Maeterlinck Collection, from the same

less with the Riviera, you might slip in Mr. and Mrs. Williamson's *Mary at Monte Carlo*, Mr. Robert Service's *The Poisoned Paradise* and my own *Caviare* and *Every Wife*. Lord Brougham, who has the reputation of having been the 'discoverer' of Cannes, may have written a lot about it, but I know not where; I know only that, on his way to Naples for his health, he was delayed by quarantine at La Napoule and so found there, almost by accident, a climate that he knew, he could not better in Southern Italy. To my mind the most interesting, as I have said – although from the point of view of provoking argument and surmise the eighteenth-century novelist must give way to him of the twentieth – is Smollett's book. He went in 1763 to 'the South of France' where he hoped that 'the mildness of the climate would prove favourable to the weak state of' his lungs. And it did. He went by way of Montpellier to Nice, and he stayed in Nice for two winters. His journey and his sojourns make pleasant reading. 'The general [one General Pater-son] talks so favourably of the climate of Nice, with respect to disorders of the breast, that I am now determined to go there,' he writes from Boulogne. Some hundred and twenty years later another novelist, another man of science, Grant Allen, made the same journey and for the same reason. Nice, Cannes and Antibes practically cured him. But when Smollett travelled it was an undertaking, and expensive – not more so, however, than such a journey with such a cortège would be now, or would have been before the War. 'The journey from Calais to Nice, of four persons in a coach, or two post-source, Maurice Maeterlinck's 'Summer on the Riviera' with its fascinating wood-cuts by Jean Julien.

chaises, with a servant on horseback, travelling post, may be performed with ease for about one hundred and twenty pounds, including every expense.' Figure out the reckoning for yourself – tickets to Nice from Calais by the Blue Train for five people, plus expenses *en route*, and adding, to make the score fair, sleeping and eating expenses for five people, one of them being a servant, for all the days that the journey in a coach must have taken, and you will arrive at much the same total. But instead of comparing the cost in money, compare the cost in time and energy and you will find a disparity indeed! I shall have happy occasion to quote Smollett a great deal in the coming pages.

Frederic Harrison was another man of letters who went travelling to the Riviera – ninety years later than Smollett. 'Of all my memories of travel,' he wrote not long before his death, 'the most abiding is that of the drive along the ancient way from Cannes to Genoa,' a sentence which shows that the authorities must have taken heed of their duties, for Smollett rated 'the nobility of Genoa' soundly for their 'low, selfish, and absurd policy' of keeping their subjects of the Riviera in poverty and dependence; 'with this view, they carefully avoid all steps towards rendering that country accessible by land'. Yes, in Smollett's day there was no other way of going from Nice to Genoa than that of the sea, 'unless you take a mule, and clamber along the mountains at the rate of two miles an hour, and at the risk of breaking your neck every minute'. This of a country which now, from Nice to Monaco, has, in spite of all the natural difficulties, *three* magnificently engineered and graded roads! How much have the peculiar attractions of Monte Carlo

been able to effect! 'The French Riviera' – I quote Frederic Harrison again – 'now has been made a Paris or a Ranelagh on the Southern Sea – a motor run – a tennis and golf ground – the Vanity Fair – if not the "hell" of cosmopolitan fashion. The historic memories, the picturesque antiquity, the *genius loci* are crowded out by modern mechanics, sports, and splendours.' Perhaps I should have quoted that passage in the last chapter among the other detractions. But Mr. Harrison did not deny the beauty and the climate of the Riviera. He deplored many of its modern developments. In that he was not altogether just. The old Riviera does still exist; it does really. Nowadays, though, it is somewhat obscured; it has to be looked for. It is true that in the day of which he wrote, seventy-five years ago, the Côte d'Azur was, from the Var to Genoa, entirely Italian – 'the Italy of the eighteenth century, with its churches, battlements, campanili, its peasants' costumes, colour, and homes, its lonely valleys, bays, and headlands, not crushed and modernized by monstrous hotels, pretentious casinos, and Parisian boulevards', but it is also true that you will still find Eze and Sospel and Peillon and Laghet and much even of Menton and Villefranche practically unspoiled. It is true too that three-quarters of a century ago the ordinary man could find neither time nor money to go so far afield. Not for him the lovely valleys, bays and headlands. Nowadays – well, I have just read in *The Times* of a Lunn excursion out of London: '13 days Lugano, Genoa, Nice Tour . . . £16 0s. 0d. with Auto Tours to Mentone, Monte Carlo, Grasse and Cannes'; Cook's do the same thing; so even does the Polytechnic. These conducted tourists in their huge charabancs do get most damnably

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in the way; they do clutter up the roads, fill the railway carriages, and debauch the hotels – but they do enjoy themselves and they must not be grudged their simple pleasures. Returned to England, they can sit under the aspidistra and discuss their sojourn under the palms. It is all to the good, even at the expense of the Italianate scene, that the Riviera is now open both winter and summer to the man of small means.

By the way, do not think that cheap excursions exhaust the energies of the tourist agencies. Far from it. They will provide you with the most elaborate plans for costly tours, a whole *train de luxe* for oneself and for one's guests, for example. I see that a Mr. Stern is announced as allowing himself that Bolshevik-provoking luxury in which to tour most of Europe. It would be rather fun, I think!

An agency that aims at supplying the needs and guiding the steps of the individual tourist is that of Morgan, Pope and Company, who have offices in London, New York and Paris. Their claim, they say, is individual service; they appear to provide it.

MR. H. G. WELLS

THE man who has praised the Riviera most generously and has criticized it most bitterly and yet most justly is H. G. Wells. I made notes as I read the three volumes of his *The World of William Clissold*, for I thought that I ought to quote some of his more golden and more acrid passages. H. G. Wells sees the whole sea-board with the artist's eye. His description of the 'old Provençal *mas*, a small farmer's house set upon a hill-side among olive terraces, not far from Grasse' is beautiful in its simplicity and in its sympathy. Read the pages that follow it and you will have an understanding of the Riviera, and you will have an answer to those who proclaim that nowadays its every acre has its dull coat of vulgarity. 'The whole of this land is a pleasant and prosperous region very indulgent to mankind. Its agriculture, like its scenery, has a delicate, fastidious quality. I never see a pig here nor any cattle; there are occasional sheep, genteel-looking sheep, there are disciplined grey geese and immaculate white poultry. Once or twice, in the more open and rocky spaces among the hills, I have met small companies of goats with goatherds. They had a quality so harmonious with the scenery that they seemed rather like elegant quotations from Theocritus than economic facts. The farmer below me is employed in growing jasmin and violets, and a little way along the road there are fields of carefully tended rose-bushes. . . . One could think that here, if anywhere in the world, was peace and permanent adaptation. . . . The soil is gener-

ous; there is no persecution in the weather, no implacable animal enemy, and little disease. Here, it would seem, a man can still be born and live a life of immemorial usage, can believe and worship after the fashion of his ancestors, and die under the blessings of his church as a child falls asleep in the arms of a nurse.' Notice the words 'it would seem', for Mr. Wells continues: 'But, indeed, this fair and specious scene is a mere mask of calm beauty upon the face of change.' I said just now that Mr. Wells looked upon the Riviera with the artist's eye. Yes, but even more, perhaps, with the eye of the politician, the economist, the sociologist. He sees that the indigenous population lives on the edge of disaster, serving 'the transitory, unstable world of luxury in Paris and London and New York'. The peasants cut down their olive trees in order to plant the ground with jasmin. . . . 'A change of fashion in scent, or some ingenuity of the chemist, may abolish the profits of this flower-growing and then these hill-sides will know trouble; for olive trees that are gone are gone for ever.'

I could quote H. G. Wells over several pages. His *Clissold* chapters are essential for an intelligent appreciation of the Coast of Pleasure — but then, after all, so few of the travellers who tread those golden roads to the South wish to have any intelligent appreciation of it and of all that its present developments imply. Most of them come South for a well-earned holiday, and if they have historic and economic knowledge and an inclination towards intelligent inquiry, they generally leave these accomplishments at home. To borrow a word from the Mrs. Rylands of a later Wells novel, most of these travellers are, or prefer to appear to be, of the tribe of Stupids.

MR. H. G. WELLS

For them these considerations of the philosopher up there on the hills in his old Provençal *mas* are as boring as they were to those 'bridge and tennis Stupids' who could not



'TENNIS STUPIDS'

contemplate the idea of another meal of talk with Mr. Sempack. There remains for their consolation, and for the consolation of all of us who still find temporary satisfaction even in the pleasures at which the philosopher is

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inclined to scoff, that Mr. Wells himself 'came to this quiet and seclusion in the sunshine' – a quiet and seclusion only just out of hearing of the main road through Grasse from Paris to Nice – rather than to any other part of the world. 'For so many of us there is nowhere else to



'BRIDGE STUPIDS'

go—quite remarkably there is not. To the North are murderous climates and to the South murderous discomforts.’ Devastating passages follow, but I will forbear from quoting them. . . . It is time that I went back to my own observations.

CANNES

MY fifth chapter ended with our passing out of the Le Trayas-Théoule tunnel and with the sight of the town of Cannes smiling across its blue sea. Smollett, in December, 1763, approached Cannes from much the same quarter. He lay at Fréjus, and then: 'This night we passed at Cannes, a little fishing town, agreeably situate on the beach of the sea.' A little fishing town! Nowadays, having passed Théoule and La Napoule with its chateau, and having recalled at La Napoule the name of Oscar Wilde in connection with the old house to the westward in which toward the end of his broken life the poet lodged, we do indeed see signs that we are approaching one of the capitals of the Coast of Pleasure. Every year the sea does its best to batter down the sea-wall which the Cannois have built as a drive and promenade and as a protection to the land. We cross a river meandering through woods and come to villas snug in orange-hung gardens. Cannes station is not inspiring – no one of these Rivieran stations, with the possible exception of Roquebrune on the other side of Monte Carlo, is very attractive – and as one emerges into the station place one has no thrill of pleasure. Cannes is like Nice and Menton: its beauty is a little away on the sea-front, where gardens are and trees, and a tactless statue of Edward VII, and the Casino. Yes, make your way at once to the Croisette, which has a most surprising view over the harbour, with its collection of large and little yachts, to the old town of Cannes, running up to Mont Chevalier. These are

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to the west. A road runs Nice-wards to the east, a road in which are wonderful rue de la Paix shops of fashion and luxury, and restaurants and hotels. Here, for instance, is the Carlton. But there are scores of hotels in Cannes, hotels for all purses – hotels in the streets between the sea-front and the station, and hotels in the plain on the other side of the railway-line, hotels, these, rather dignified and old-fashioned, and declaring themselves by their aspect to be of the days when Queen Victoria was on the throne and jazz and lounge-lizards and *diners de gala* were unknown.

At Cannes one plays polo and one plays tennis and one plays golf and one yachts, and one looks on at horse-racing – and one bathes earlier in the year than is the custom at the other resorts. For the strenuous English and Americans have a lot to do with the setting of the pace at Cannes, and the large number of villas that surround it and the yachts that frequent its waters ensure a society by no means devoid of vigorous youth. You may play baccarat in the Casino till the sun is gilding the waves, and yet, far more than farther along the coast, it is the thing to be up and about and worshipping at the shrine of the goddess of exercise before the morning is very far advanced.

Turning over some old papers, I see that seven years ago I wrote not very politely of Cannes:

‘Of course a great deal depends on where you elect to stop on the Riviera. The chic thing to do is to live at Cannes and to dash about the sea-board in a luxurious and high-powered car. But you may not have a car, and, anyhow, Cannes is a stuck-up sort of place which does not open its arms to the casual visitor. Besides, it is situ-

ated at one end of the Riviera. It is better to be somewhere in the middle.'

Well, what I wrote can stand: Cannes is still situated at one end of the Riviera. Monsieur Cornuché could not easily have altered that in the short time at his disposal even if he had wanted to do so. And as for the cars, they are more luxurious and high-powered than ever. What is the record for an ordinary drive under ordinary conditions from Cannes to Monte Carlo? Seventy minutes? I don't know. It is about thirty miles in actual distance, but what miles of horrid twists and turns, of selfish tramways and juggernaut charabancs! You dash over to 'Monte' – as they will persist in calling it – to tea; you play roulette or trente-et-quarante at the 'Sporting' for half an hour; on the way back you stop at the Negresco at Nice for a cocktail; and yet you have time to be dressed and to go out to dinner in Cannes. Strenuous? Perhaps. But that is the Riviera. That, perhaps, is why I call it the Coast of Pleasure. Why, even if you have no car, not even a little Citroën, you treat that sea-board as if it were all one town. There are trains and there are tram-cars and there are charabancs. Sometimes one has a feeling that these democratic methods of travel are safer than Rolls-Royces and Hispano-Suizas! Sometimes, though, even the heavy charabancs have accidents. There was a bad one between Monte Carlo and Nice in September, 1927.

Cannes is elegant. Odd it was that Maxim's, in the rue Royale in Paris, should have reared in one of its waiters the arbiter of fastidious Cannes, for Maxim's was raffish under Cornuché and had few conventions that made for style and distinction. But there it is. Cornuché seems to have been a genius at his job, a thick-necked little

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man who tucked his napkin into the opening of his waistcoat and 'went at' his food. I watched him being entertained once by Lottier, that excellent, but less ambitious, restaurateur who both owns and commands the *Réserve* at Beaulieu. It was a comedy to see those captains of the kitchen, those officers in the army of pleasure, hobnobbing with one another. . . . Well, Cornuché 'made' Cannes as we now know it, made Cannes as he made Deauville. And since the climate of the Riviera is not very good for the passion with which Maxim's is associated,¹ he did his best to encourage man's other pleasant pastimes, and in particular the pleasure of gambling. In the Municipal Casino at Cannes you can play baccarat for as high stakes as anywhere else in the world. Monte Carlo is democratic, a piker's paradise, compared to Cannes. Cannes is the chosen battle-ground of Messieurs Vagliano and Zographos and the other merry men of the Greek syndicate which puts up most of the baccarat banks and loses and wins gigantic sums in an evening's play. Mr. H. V. Morton has drawn pictures of Cannes as well as anybody. Here is one sketch:

'In the gambling rooms the swivel-eyed croupiers lean over the green baize in their respectable little frock-coats, controlling the flight of money with their soft, competent voices. Queer men! As a type, distinct as jockeys. Round them sit men and women – mostly women – who – and this is strange – immediately become types when they sit down to gamble. White fingers covered in rings

¹ The famous Casanova, who specialized in the subject, noticed this too. Writing of Corfu he remarks that 'gambling is allowed everywhere, and that all-absorbing passion was very prejudicial to the emotions of the heart'.

flip thousand-franc notes in bundles into the great beyond. Now and then you catch an eye. It tells you something: to what extent is the desire for publicity behind the woman who gambles heavily? I think she likes to feel herself the centre of this emotional drama. Watch her go in recklessly over her head; watch her draw her cloak a little closer round her shoulders; watch her make sure that you are watching! What an unreal glitter it is. I wonder what the croupiers talk about at home. . . .'

The people who run the 'publicity' of Cannes are clever. They employ good artists. I have before me a delightful 'folder' on which is pictured by Monsieur Hemjic the beauty of the Croisette.¹ I give you my word that the place is every bit as attractive as the picture. Perhaps the artist has left out the old men and the old women and has given a rather exaggerated chic to the young girls and an excessive air of vapid distinction to the young men, but nevertheless he has drawn Cannes. He has made a beautiful pattern of the palm trees, the line of the Estérel, the sea, the harbour, the ships, the old town, the great Danes, the motor-cars, the children, and the young slim men in their elegant grey suits and the young slim girls in their modish uniform. . . .

There are, of course, an endless number of stories told about the gaming-rooms at Cannes. Some of them are true. I personally feel towards most of them that, unless I have seen the wonderful happenings with my own eyes, they are very doubtful. Baccarat, however, does not lend itself so readily to the telling of stories as roulette

¹ He has done another, a peach, advertising the Summer Blue Train. Collectors will be searching for it hereafter.

does, although it is a more dramatic game. One of the best Cannes tales is of a rich American called Day, who, watching the Greek syndicate holding the bank against the world, thought it would be great fun to do likewise.

'Can I take over a bank like that?' he asked.

'Why, certainly.'

He then explained that he did not know the game well – how many of the unprofessional players do? – and that, as a matter of fact, he had never held a baccarat bank before. At his suggestion the syndicate consented to help him.

At the first coup, according to the story, the syndicate, which, although it was seeing that Mr. Day made no mistake in the rules and the conventions, was yet free to play against him, staked two million francs at one end of the table and one million at the other. A million francs at that time was worth, say, eight thousand pounds, or forty thousand dollars. The bank, therefore, stood to lose twenty-four thousand pounds. Mr. Day protested; he had not meant to play for such high stakes. He was told that that couldn't be helped now; it was a *banque ouverte*. Later, of course, he could make his own conditions. So he dealt the cards – and lost, lost to both ends of the table. However, they went on playing: Mr. Day had to, I suppose, and evidently he was 'a sport'. After a while he had lost a sum variously estimated at between fifty-eight and seventy-five thousand pounds – not that even the larger is a very surprising total since in the first coup a third of that sum was risked and lost. Spring madness, the whole thing, of course. It is out of such insanities that Monsieur Vagliano, Monsieur Zographos and his fellow Greeks make their money. By the way,

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the same correspondent who sent that story home told also of a young Canadian who won half a million francs at one sitting, the first of the day. He took no chances with his winnings. The early hour gave him time to run out to the bank – the other kind of bank – and cable the whole sum home. They say that he made all this money out of a gambling capital of sixty francs, say, ten shillings, or two and a half dollars!

You only have to see the amount of space given in the English papers to Cannes and its season to realize how very much it counts as a resort of fashion. The tennis, of course, brings one sort of people, the polo at Mandelieu another; the racing and the golf help. First, however, in order of importance come the yachts. There is a very select Cannes set, and then there are other Cannes sets. Cannes does not open its arms very wide to the stranger. One wonders whether under Monsieur André, who has taken over Monsieur Cornuché's interests both here and at Deauville, it will continue to retain its supremacy. Not if Monte Carlo can help it, you may be sure! I wonder, however, whether Monte Carlo will produce a man of the Cornuché brilliance. Monte Carlo seems set at present on a mixed policy of economy and ostentation, over-building and fee-charging. And perhaps Monte Carlo has evolved a definitely democratic policy of its own, and would rather have the little fish with their second-class tickets and their hundred-franc notes than the big ones with their Rolls-Royces and their exclusiveness.

By the way, do not take it for granted that all you have to do is to walk into the baccarat rooms at Cannes. You can play boule, that foolish and horribly unfair game,

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without any restrictions, save those of limit of stake, as long as you pay the few francs exacted for admission to the Casino; but baccarat is a more serious matter, and the rooms of the Cercle in which it is played, the inner chambers, so to speak, of the goddess of chance, are rigorously controlled and surveyed by the financial and police authorities. It is odd to make difficulties about letting the foreigner go in and lose his money, very odd; but it is so, and it is no use kicking. However, the difficulties really come to very little in the end. Your passport and the payment of the subscription will between them act as an Open Sesame. By the way, do not expect to find roulette and trente-et-quarante played at Cannes; these are games of chance and are not allowed by the law. Baccarat, they say, is a game of skill. The Greek syndicate is a proof of it.

The places at which to eat in Cannes are rather of the cosmopolitan kind. The Carlton Hotel and the Ambassadeurs, the restaurant of the Casino, are, of course, the smart places, and they certainly are very smart. Propitiate the management and you will do very well. Speak pleasantly to your *maître d'hôtel* and see that he is satisfied when you leave the table after your first meal under his auspices. So you will ensure a welcome on your return. Of a different kind of restaurant, the smart and amusing place last season was the Casanova, with its cabaret and dancing-floor. A Russian place, it draws visitors from Nice and even from Monte Carlo, yea, even after midnight. It is a supper place *par excellence*. The same Miss Meg Villars whom I have already quoted recommended me the Caveau, at 35, rue Félix Faure, as a place good of its kind and moderate in its charges. Mr. Morton Shand has

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been at the Caveau recently: 'I discovered excellent Corsican wine, Santa Lucia. After the awful Var and Alpes Maritimes wines . . . and the rather bitter Niçois Bellet such as one gets on the Riviera, it was a real treat.' When later, in Nice, *chez* Pere Bottin, Mr. Morton Shand drank Chateau de Bellet, he thought better of the possibilities of the Bellet wines. A French friend of mine strongly recommends the Oustalet, behind the Hotel Majestic. A little along the bay, Antibes-wards, is a Réserve on its tiny promontory of rocks. Specially a fish place. It was good when I was there, twenty years ago.

Finally, before we explore the Cannes hinterland, let me quote a sentence, just by way of contrast, from Frederic Harrison: 'In 1853 Cannes was a pretty fishing village, a single auberge, no promenade, and but two large villas.' To Smollett, ninety years earlier, it had been 'a little fishing town', and, on a second visit, 'a neat village'.

EXCURSIONS FROM CANNES

THE Maritime Alps have been so arranged by Providence that the excursions from Cannes are also the excursions from Nice and Monte Carlo, and even, for the matter of that, the excursions from Menton. For instance, Peira Cava, where one can enjoy winter sports, ski-ing and so on, almost as well, at least from the point of view of the non-enthusiast, as at St. Moritz. I had always thought it a place to go to from Nice, but friends of mine motored to it last February from Monte Carlo, and I have photographs before me to testify to the depth of the snow and the veritable discomfort of the other adjuncts of winter. But it is not of such winter excursions I would now write.

Grasse is the chief of all the excursions out of Cannes. By railway, by tramcar, by charabanc, by private motor — you can take your choice. A dozen miles. Two things about Grasse stand out: they make soap there — I have no reason to suppose it is very good soap, but it is true that I may have been unfortunate in my choice — and perfume, and it is the birthplace of Fragonard. No, candidly, if you have not much time to spare I really do not advise you to spend your precious minutes on those soap and scent factories. It might be a different matter if you were shown the processes in an intelligent order. But the premises are old and you see the thing in a higgledy-piggledy way. To make it amusing, to make it truly interesting and intelligent, you would see a tumbril (or whatever they call the vehicle) of violets or other

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flowers arrive at the factory gates, and you would follow the history of that load, or a similar load, until its flowers were the dominant factor in a carton of soap or a case of perfume all packed up and ready for the market. Unhappily, they don't show you the process in that way. . . . But make no mistake: Grasse itself is worth your exploring. Less perhaps than most of its companion hill-side towns which fashion has taken for its own is it spoiled. From Grasse you can go farther up and inland to Thorenc and Castellane and Digne. Wonderful roads. In the summer you can do these excursions by auto-bus. Certainly I would prefer any kind of local vehicle to a car driven by a recently imported chauffeur, however good he might be. At Grasse, by the way, I should be inclined to try the Grand Hotel. It is run by the people who have the Savoy at Fontainebleau.

But perhaps I should have given first place to the Iles de Lérins, which protect Cannes from the full force of the Mediterranean seas and look, on a fine day, so romantic across its smiling waters. For a trifle you can go to them in a motor-boat. The Ile Ste. Marguerite is the more immediately interesting. Here that enigma, 'The Man in the Iron Mask', was imprisoned for a dozen years; some say he died there, but that is not true. You are shown his cell in that huge fort which Richelieu built, and which a few years ago was full of cheerful German prisoners, the fortunate tourists or residents who were caught on the Riviera when war broke out. But its companion, the Ile St. Honorat, has its attractions. On both of them you can, according to report, lunch well enough. I cannot understand why Marshal Bazaine, the last political offender to be imprisoned on these islands,

should have taken the trouble to escape; the Lérins are surely a very delightful place in which to spend the final years of a broken life. Political prisoners are altogether too restless. In spite of the beauty of its position in relation to the Estérel and other mountains which surround Cannes and Antibes, I do not find Ste. Marguerite as satisfying an island as Port-Cros. Its woods are beautiful, but it is not hilly, and while to the seaward side the coast seems unspoiled, one soon discovers that picnickers from the mainland have scattered the rocks with the débris of their feasts, broken bottles and old chocolate and cigarette boxes. Indeed, in this last respect it is almost as distressing to walk in Ste. Marguerite as in Jersey. A rumour has it that either Ste. Marguerite or St. Honorat is to be turned into a watering-place in the special gambling sense of the term. I should think it extremely unlikely.

Then from Cannes or from Grasse, if you like – perhaps, indeed, it is better to take it in the reverse direction, beginning with the Gorges and dropping down on Grasse – you must go to the Gorges du Loup, where in one or the other of the hotels at the bridge you eat remarkably well. Only the other day Mr. A. E. Housman was reminding me of the fresh trout and the fresh truffles – in an omelette, these last – eaten in March, 1915, at the Grand Hotel du Loup. After threading the Gorges, you zigzag up and up, *en auto*, of course, often regretting all the time that you have not brought that fur coat or that extra rug, to Gourdon, ‘the village on the pinnacle’. If you have the capacity for amazement, prepare to show it now. Do you remember Gustave Doré’s illustrations to *Don Quixote*, those terrifying mountains, those precipices of horror? Recently the Chateau passed into the restoring

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hands of an American lady, but the village is yours to walk about in. The view from its ledges and the view



THE BEAUTIFUL LOWER ROAD TO MONTE CARLO

from the castle at Eze — which we shall come to in a later chapter — are among the most satisfying on the

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whole Riviera. By the way, Scotsmen will tell you that the name Gourdon is a corruption of Gordon, that the original Gourdon was a Gordon. You need not believe it.

And you should make your chauffeur drive you up to the heights of Castellaris – perhaps at the sunset hour.

‘From Cannes eastwards’, says Smollett, writing on December 6, 1763, ‘the road lies along the seaside; and sure nothing can be more delightful. Though in the morning there was a frost upon the ground, the sun was as warm as it is in May in England. The sea was quite smooth, and the beach formed of white polished pebbles; on the left hand the country was covered with green olives, and the side of the road planted with large trees of sweet-myrtle growing wild like the hawthorns in England.’ Little of that road still exists. Most of its pleasant levels have been usurped by the gardens of new-built villas. The road now, the motor road to Nice, runs a little inland past the establishments of nursery gardeners. . . .

GOLFE-JUAN, ANTIBES, A MEMORY OF GRANT ALLEN, AND CAGNES

AFTER Cannes, Golfe-Juan – where the Vallauris pottery comes from, pottery which used to look so well in the 'eighties: you can visit the factory; it is worth while – and Juan-les-Pins, and after Juan-les-Pins, Antibes. Juan-les-Pins was a very unassuming place in the old days, but it has burgeoned and blossomed since then; indeed, it seems to have found its own little Cornuché, and I hear all sorts of pleasant things about its gaiety – especially its gaiety in the summer, although its Casino in the usual season is also, I am told, a very amusing and satisfying place. I went to look at Juan-les-Pins the other day, but rather late in the season, in mid-October. Unhappily I arrived in rain, and it was difficult to believe that this sad place, suffering, like so much of the Riviera, from a fury of building, was really the Juan-les-Pins of which recently we have heard so much. 'Where is Juan-les-Pins?' I asked an old French lady who was engaged in putting up her shutters. She answered me that I stood on its sea-front. 'But where is its gaiety?' 'Parti, Monsieur, parti avec les Anglais!' Friends of mine stopped here through the winter of '26–27; they sent home wonderful accounts of the beauty of the young girl visitors who danced at the Casino galas; but for the visitor from the North I fancy that Juan-les-Pins is a safer bet in the summer. Then there are motor-boat racing, fireworks and other diversions, and it is then, I am told, altogether a sort of little Lido, although I seem to have read that the

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Municipality thought it necessary very seriously to chide some English visitors who allowed themselves the same liberty as they would have enjoyed on that Venetian beach – walked about in their rather scanty bathing



THE SUNNY SOUTH AT JUAN-LES-PINS!

garb, or something of the kind! That, however, was a year or more ago, and even in France the tendency is towards greater freedom. The mayor, however, has recently issued a ukase to the effect that bathers are to

wear as much in the way of clothes as they would require in an English watering-place. His rule, I fancy, is not taken literally. There is an amusing story going about to the effect that Madame Caroline Otero, who has a reputation of her own in such matters, was so outraged in her sense of propriety by the exiguity of the costume worn here by Monsieur Jean-Gabriel Domergue that she entered a formal, a legal protest! On the other hand, dress is not much interfered with at night. 'Tenue de soirée' – by which is meant a dinner-jacket, a 'tuxedo' – is not obligatory even in the baccarat rooms. One associates night gambling scenes with beautiful dresses and dress-clothes, and I for one hear with regret of this abrogation of the usual sumptuary law. With its growing popularity in the summer Juan-les-Pins prices are likely to soar. They will have to, indeed; 'land at Juan-les-Pins has risen in three years from fr. 15 a square metre to fr. 700'. An estate agent said that. He added that he had seen an old lady who runs a small pension near the Casino refuse eight thousand pounds for her property without bothering to look up from her washing! 'A.D.C.' of the *Daily Mail*, who has the gift of the apt phrase, describes it as the Benjamin of the six French fashionable resorts, *superplages*, already beginning to rival Deauville, Dinard, La Baule, Le Touquet and Biarritz in its smartness and popularity; he also says its note is Anglo-American rather than French or generally cosmopolitan. This may or may not be an advantage. From my own point of view its one defect is that its bathing is from the beach, and that it takes a long time to get into deep water, which, though, when you do reach it, is furnished with better and higher diving-boards than I have seen elsewhere on these coasts.

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The rock-bathing of 'the Cap' is, however, not so very far off. Certainly it is likely that the sun-bath devotee will have a fiercer ordeal on the Golfe-Juan than at the northern *plages*. It is imperative, one is told, as it is at Monte Carlo, to grease oneself with olive or coco-nut oil, or one may shed one's skin with one's pallor. By the way, in the Casino restaurant, which is run by 'Charles' (whom old-timers will remember with the whiskered 'Jules' at Ciro's, at Monte Carlo, and then at the Café de Paris), Juan-les-Pins made last summer a great reputation for its *hors-d'œuvres*. I have so far associated the best Rivieran *hors-d'œuvres* with the Réserve at Beaulieu, Caramello's place at St. Jean, and the Amiraute at Menton. The hotel at Juan-les-Pins is the Provençal, put up at a cost of from twenty to thirty million francs by Mr. Frank Gould, the American. My friends tell me that it is the best hotel with the best kitchen in the neighbourhood (I did not think much of my one meal there), and they quoted prices which suggest that at present at least its charges are moderate. One Quilliam, a land-agent, and then Mr. Gould, are the men who have 'made' Juan-les-Pins. At present, however, in its unfinished state, the town does look like an American suburb (with the added attraction of a very blue sea) – especially when it is raining!

Antibes is a name to conjure with. The old town of Antibes, hard by the station, is not on the Golfe-Juan, which, by the way, is a favourite resting-place of French men-of-war, but in the actual Baie des Anges, and indeed it looks on Nice just as Théoule looks on Cannes. It was called Antibes because it stands directly opposite Nice. In Smollett's time it was the frontier of France towards Italy, and they used in those days to give you a deuce of

a time at the Customs hereabouts. 'If you do not gratify the searchers at St. Laurent with half-a-crown, they will rummage your trunks and turn all your clothes topsyturvy.'¹ You did not have a book like this to tell you what you were to expect, nor did you have a 'Blue Guide' or a 'Baedeker'. Apparently, however, you had something called 'The Grand Tour', which told you that 'from Antibes to Nice the roads are very bad, through rugged mountains bordered with precipices on the left, and by the sea to the right'. There have been earthquakes in the region since then, but I am not prepared to believe that they smoothed away the mountains and the precipices. Actually, the sea-road from Antibes to Nice is decorum itself, flat, flat – so flat that there is a race-course by its side which is a jolly sight flatter than Epsom. It is along this road that, to quote once more from Mr. Wells's *Clissold*, there 'drives the restless fever of a new breed of rich people, people cut off from the tradition of the past and incapable it would seem of any interest in the future. . . . Their great fat-tyred cars go throbbing and hooting past, the chauffeur is glassily intent upon the road, the passengers – are passengers. The clothes they wear, the very complexions of the women, seem to have been put upon their passive persons by the tradesmen of Paris and London before they packed off in their cars.'

Yes, Mr. Wells's implications are devastating. . . .

But we are concerned with Antibes. It is generally described in the history books as the landfall of Napoleon

¹ I cannot forbear quoting Smollett's next sentence: 'And here, once for all, I would advise every traveller, who counts his own ease and convenience, to be liberal of his money to all that sort of people. . . . So sure as you enter into disputes with them, you will be put to a great deal of trouble, and fret yourself to no manner of purpose.'

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

after his return from Elba. It was at Golfe-Juan that he landed. No matter; it was in the neighbourhood.

Antibes is an interesting old town and the harbour always gives me a Moorish impression as I pass it in the train. J. D. Fergusson did some of his best painting here, and the whole headland is a great place for the growing of flowers for the market. Far more exciting than the town, however, is Cap d'Antibes, two or three miles away, with its views to one side of the Estérel and to the other of Nice, the Tête de Chien over Monte Carlo and the Italian Alps, and with its gardens and its rock-bathing. Is there better rock-bathing than from the extremity of the Cap, now that the Grand Hotel du Cap people have taken it in hand and have made a place fit for heroes to bathe in? The garden of that hotel, by the way, is more than a garden: it is a park. And one of the stories of my own life that it gives me most pleasure to dwell on is what happened to me years before the War at that hotel. I must explain that Grant Allen, the writer, was my uncle, and it was he who made the vogue of the Cap by certain articles which, quite disinterestedly, he wrote in W. T. Stead's *Pall Mall Gazette*. I think Monsieur Sella, the proprietor of the hotel, would not disagree with me. Well, anyhow, Grant Allen went year after year to the Cap and stopped there for four, five, six months, returning always to the same rooms. A year or two after his death I was staying at Monte Carlo with one of England's best known agnostics, himself one of Grant Allen's warmest admirers. We felt it our duty, our duty and a pleasure indeed, to make pilgrimage to the Cap, to lay, so to speak, an offering of memory at our friend's shrine. We arrived in January, before there were many people at the hotel – and this is what happened:

At the table d'hôte luncheon, the guests being all at one table, we found ourselves faced by two clergymen and three ladies, for one clergyman had two of the females of his species attached to him (I have often been asked by Latin innkeepers to explain why it is that the Anglican clergyman travels so generally, not with one, but with two ladies. I did not, and do not, know the answer). Clearing his throat, the more solid of the clergymen addressed C., my bearded friend:

'May I ask, sir, whether you have come to join our little party?'

C., although an agnostic, has little of the agnostic's liking for the cloth. He answered shortly, but without discourtesy, that we had only come over for the day.

'And may I be allowed to ask where you may have come from? From Cannes?'

'No, from Monte Carlo,' C. replied, with a certain malicious satisfaction.

'Ah, a terrible place! A terrible place, sir. I am glad it is so far away.'

'Why, I'm astonished to hear you say that! What is there terrible about it? Very clean. Very beautiful. Very gay and amusing.'

'But, my friend, what gaiety! what amusement!'

I saw that C. was becoming ruffled, and broke in at that point with the declaration that Antibes had certain advantages over Monte Carlo — quietude, a simpler and more natural beauty. . . . I fear I rather overdid it, but not sufficiently so to raise suspicion.

My interposition lightened the strain. Our clergyman spoke to the lady next to him in lowered voice so that we might not hear. She seemed to assent to some proposition, and he turned to me:

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'We are getting up a subscription, sir — a fund to which we hope you will care to subscribe.' The 'you' was evidently plural and I looked my interest. 'Yes, a subscription for an English church. We feel, my friends and I, that so many English people come nowadays to Antibes, make it their winter home, that there ought to be a place for them to worship nearer than Nice or Cannes.'

Although not myself a churchgoer, I saw no reason why I should not agree with my new acquaintance. I said as much. He smiled sympathetically at the mention of my own shortcomings.

'And when do you hope to achieve your end? Soon? Are subscriptions coming in well?' I asked.

At this our clergyman's wife took a hand in the conversation: 'Oh, very well, and we hope — in fact, we know — that the dear bishop when he comes . . .'

It happened that on the previous evening, in the Cercle Privé at Monte Carlo, I had put a louis on some number at roulette that C. had capriciously recommended. And the number had turned up! A banker with strong ideas about the theory of chance — was he not a friend of Richard Proctor? — C. said I was to leave my louis on. I did so. The number turned up again. I had won twice thirty-five louis, seventy louis in all, and, as it was before the days in which the lucky gambler who brings off an '*en plein*' (a stake on a single number) is expected to put a fraction of his winnings into the croupier's box, I had those seventy louis in my pocket — was, indeed, very conscious of the fact that they were burning a hole in that pocket. Here was my chance.

'Sir,' I said, looking as pleasantly and as ingenuously

as I could at the clerical party opposite me, 'I will very happily subscribe fifty pounds towards your fund, and will give it you now before I leave -'

I paused. My clergyman and his friends looked all the astonishment they certainly felt.

'Yes, I will give it you now if - if you on your part will subscribe between you - between you, mind - the sum of five pounds to an object that I and my companion have very much at heart.'

Astonishment persisted, but to it was added curiosity.

'As I dare say you know, this hotel through many years was the winter home of Grant Allen, the philosopher, the novelist. My friend and I feel that something should be done here to commemorate that fact. We do not care whether it takes the shape of a plaque on the wall of the entrance hall - if the *patron* will allow it - or the foundation of a visitors' library, to be called the Grant Allen Memorial Library. One or the other. Our only condition is that, if it is a library that is chosen as the most suitable form in which to ensure that the memory of Grant Allen shall be preserved, then that library must contain a complete set of his books.'

At the mention of five pounds the ladies looked depressed and doubtful, and one of them broke in at once:

'Grant Allen. Yes. M'yes. Didn't he write rather odd books? Was he not the author of *The Woman - The Woman Who Did*, I think it was called? Not a nice book.' She looked at the other woman as if to apologize for mentioning such a work before a young virgin.

'Yes,' I replied, and C. broke in: 'And a very good book too, madam, if you will allow me to differ from you.'

The clergyman who had done all the talking sniffed.

'I don't know. I don't know. I must – we must think over your suggestion. Grant Allen's books were not quite – were not quite orthodox, shall we say? Yes, that, perhaps, is the word. Heterodox and wrong-headed, subversive. Not suitable. You will allow us perhaps to withdraw and to talk the matter over while you have your coffee. We will give you our decision in a quarter of an hour.'

'Certainly,' I replied; 'but let there be no mistake about it. Here, see, is my fifty pounds – twelve hundred and sixty francs. You have only to come back and ask for it.'

They withdrew to their chambers, and C. and I went out to take our coffee in the hall; and C. forthwith fell on me for a fool, an extravagant scoundrel, and then, as I only laughed at him, proceeded to make fun of the hesitant, parsonic mind, not noticing, poor dear, and being, for that moment at least, no Sir Reynard in caution, that the young virgin was seated at her knitting only a chair or so away. I did not see her myself until she leapt to her feet with a snort and followed her friends to an upper floor. Why she should have been quite so indignant I have no idea. C. had not really been offensive.

In five minutes one clergyman descended.

'Sir, we have considered your offer, and we regret to have to decline it. It is altogether unacceptable. I wish you "Good day", ' and he swept from the hall. I saw him later playing halma on the balcony. At the time – many years before the War – I thought these English clerical *hivernants* had been very foolish. Nowadays I am not so sure about it. One learns tolerance. And, anyhow, I kept my fifty pounds.

Let us walk now in the park which is the garden of the hotel. A broad avenue leads through shrubbery and wood

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to the sea; away to the west is the Estérel range, mountains clear-cut against the afternoon sun. The walk ends in a terrace, beneath which, if it is rather late in the season, young people, slim and beautiful of line, flash from rock to sea, cleave the sea with their strong arms, come from the sea in a sparkle of diamonds. It is in the summer, however, that this bathing aspect of Antibes is at its best. Last summer, for instance, it was a nest of Hollywood celebrities, who have the art of filling the picture pleasantly. The rocks, it is, that give the Cap its great charm for swimmers. One bathe in which you dive into thirty feet of water is worth a dozen in which, before you can get out of your depth, you have to tread a hundred yards of sand. The 'surf-board' is a further attraction of the bathing here and elsewhere on this coast, although here it has a particular fascination as you are disporting yourself in deep, very deep, water. It is a fashion that has arrived from Australia and the South Seas: a motor-boat cruises about, dragging in its wake a plank half an inch thick, five feet long and two feet wide. This plank will bear your weight only when it is going along at a considerable speed. At first, while the motor-boat is gathering speed, you can only cling to it with your hands. Then you manage to rise to your knees, and when you are going really fast, say twenty miles an hour, you can even stand erect. But to remain erect requires a great deal more skill and balance than most beginners command. . . . It is great fun. At Monte Carlo I have seen as many as three people standing erect on the same board. The faster went the boat, the more amused they were. Then suddenly a turn more violent than its predecessors, and the whole party was thrown into the waves.

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

As at Juan-les-Pins, the value of land on the Cap has soared recently to undreamt-of heights. Take Eileen-Roc, for instance, the late James Wylie's beautiful property. Worried by the demands of the French income-tax officials, James Wylie's successor not long ago sold it – for something not much over a million francs. That was since the War, of course. Later its purchasers put it up for auction. It was knocked down for twenty-two and a half million. That James Wylie had an eye for beautiful country. Most of the Cap was his until he sold half of it to Mr. Charles Maclaren, now Lord Aberconway, who built La Garoupe, one of the show places of the whole Riviera. There is on the Cap the tomb of a young naval officer, de la Vernède, who is the subject of one of the poems in Baron Emil d'Erlanger's 'Mon Humble Plaisir'.

But our Antibes day is drawing to a close. Nice beckons from across the bay. Little need keep us, although, before leaving the Cap, we must see the wonderful view from the lighthouse, and then we may care to run a few miles up the valley of the Brague to the village of Biot, whence come those jars destined for grain and olive-oil which delight the eye through all the countries of the Mediterranean. Then, if you are motoring, by the straight road below Cagnes, where the Nice golf-course is, a course more conveniently visited by private car than by electric tram or train. Later on you must visit Cagnes from Nice. It will be easy. You will pass by it so often, the old town crowning the hill, I mean, not only the golf-course and the club-house. Its castle, the Chateau Grimaldi, dates from the fourteenth century, and you are invited to visit it. It contains a monument of perverse

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ingenuity, a ceiling-painting by Carlone. Renoir lived and worked at Cagnes—the energy of the man: at the end he painted with the brush strapped to his wrist, as he could no longer use his crippled hand (which is no doubt one reason for the inferiority of his later work)!—and so did Monsieur Foujita, that strange painter in



whom East and West have met. A writer in *The Times* claims that the view from the Place de la Mairie deserves to be famous all the world over: it suggests, not unworthily, he says, that of the Pyrenees from Pau. Yes, Cagnes is worth visiting—more than once if you can spare the time.

The Automobile Club d'Antibes Juan-les-Pins holds in April a Circuit International.

ARRIVAL IN NICE

NICE! What a place! One hundred and twenty-six thousand inhabitants according to the last figures available to me. Many more by now, I am sure. People crowd into Nice during the season and in the duller months it has none of the deadness of the ordinary seaside town. No such blight falls on it when the season is over as falls on Ostend, say. Perhaps there is always a season at Nice; certainly the station is always bustling, and there is never a daylight hour when the Avenue de la Victoire, the broad thoroughfare, shop and café-lined, which runs from the station down to the Place Masséna and the gardens, is not full of people. The station used to be so inadequate, a narrow funnel indeed, under one arched roof, for all those trains of every category that passed through it in the course of the day. Towards the end of the War the rest-trains would arrive, loaded with American soldiers – for Nice was perhaps the most popular of the rest-centres. The compartments of those trains bulged with delighted soldiers, singing, sweating, jolly. . . . To-day one hardly knows the improved station; larger, it is metropolitan rather than local, and it is not until one has got some distance away from it that one sees the real town. Just opposite the station – no, a little to the left – are half a dozen hotels, all of them pretty good of their kind and not immoderate in their prices. If you have not already secured quarters on the Promenade des Anglais on the sea or at Cimiez on the hill, or if your stay at Nice is only to be for a night or two, then you cannot do better

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than choose the Terminus or the Cecil. All that part of Nice and of the Avenue until you approach the public gardens is like so many other large French towns. If you have arrived just after one of the days of Carnival, you will be delighted or vexed, according to your temperament, by the fact that the plane trees of the Avenue are festooned by the decaying paper serpentins of the fête. It is the price one pays for gaiety. And the Place Masséna to which you come is not, especially if you are an American and used to the dignity of the great architecture of the great cities of the Eastern states, quite what you expected. Italianate and amusing, yes, but more than a little worn and battered; too many advertisements on the walls, too, and on the pillars of the arcades. I doubt, however, whether one would gain in picturesqueness as much as one would certainly lose by any change. To those of us who have known Nice since the 'eighties or 'nineties there is something very characteristic about the soiled stucco pretensions of the Place. Besides, at this point the whole note of the town changes.

The Place Masséna is dominated on its left by the Casino Municipal, in front of which is the tramway centre of the town. Those tramways! Americans are more used to their insistent clamour and to their poking their way into the most beautiful streets of a town than are the English. The Casino is the centre, in a way, of the pleasure life of the town, the democratic life and the expensive. It holds a great hall of music, and rooms in which are many *boule* tables. (Do not forget that at *boule* the chances against you are five to four, whereas at roulette and at trente-et-quarante, a few miles farther on, at Monte Carlo, the chances are only something in the neigh-

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bourhood of thirty-six to thirty-five. No, boule has no advantage save that you can play in one-franc stakes, that, in fact, it enables you actually to gamble on the Riviera with stakes worth twopence or four cents apiece! Boule has actually the equivalent of four zeros!)

On the first floor of the Casino, which you reach from the Place by another and more dignified entrance, is one of the best restaurants (and one of the dearest: order *caviare blinis*) in France, and a *salle de jeux* in which baccarat and chemin-de-fer are played and large sums are won and lost. As a centre for baccarat, however, Nice now takes in the winter season second place to Cannes; and visitors to Monte Carlo who want to play 'chemmy' – really I dislike calling chemin-de-fer 'chemmy' as much as I dislike calling Monte Carlo 'Monte' – are no longer forced to come over to Nice or to go to Menton, for it is played both in the private rooms of the Monte Carlo Casino and in the 'Sporting'. These innovations have considerably interfered with Nice as a vortex of fashion and of excitement. It is on that account that one constantly hears of petitions being projected in all these French Rivieran pleasure towns to gain permission to play the same games – roulette and trente-et-quarante – which at present are Monte Carlo's unique advantage. Not to be allowed to offer them to the stranger as an attraction puts the Niçois and the Cannois at a disadvantage. . . .

But in the first hours of your arrival in Nice you will not, I hope, want to dash to the baccarat table or even to enter the Casino. Turn rather to the right out of the Place Masséna and look at the very wonderful shops of the Avenue de Verdun, shops held season after season by the

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big dressmakers from Paris, the big jewellers, the luxury traders. By the way, it may be a convenience to you to know that in their midst are the bureau of the Wagons-Lits



THE UBIQUITOUS NUISANCE

Company and a good chemist; and that, later, if, following the Avenue de Verdun till it comes to the sea at the Hotel Ruhl, you go a little way along the Promenade des Anglais, you come to the offices of Messrs. Thomas Cook

and Son and of the American Express Company. But to return to those shops in the Avenue de Verdun. You will find everything you want in them. Shirts and ties, if you are a man; trunks, jewels, furs, dresses, perfumes, hats – oh, everything that the heart of woman can desire. You may like to know also that a little way up the Avenue de la Victoire, just out of the Place Masséna indeed, there is a huge branch of the Paris Galeries Lafayette, which caters for the middle-class income. . . . Old-timers like myself seldom walk along the Avenue de Verdun, which used to be called the Avenue Masséna – the ghost of the old Marshal must have been hurt in his feelings when the change was made, but then the French are always doing that sort of thing! – without looking across the grass to the west at the shell of the London House. Alas! what once was a restaurant of the highest tradition is now a tea-shop; that it is no doubt an excellent meeting-place for those who like tea and scones is not sufficient to overcome the bitter regret for the years that have passed. Nor is Nice nowadays so very well off in the matter of good restaurants apart from those which are attached to the hotels. The Régence in the Avenue de la Victoire is only a shadow of its former self, for most of the site of that building which used to hold brasserie and eating-house, restaurant de luxe, hotel and private rooms has been given over to a baser commerce. In other words, it is a Bank that occupies the space. And there used to be at least one restaurant on the Promenade des Anglais where one could sit in a garden and talk of the traditions of the old French cuisine. Not that the Promenade des Anglais has lost much of what it was except a certain mid-eighteenth-century character. It is still, as are the Croisette at Cannes

and the Terrace at Monte Carlo, one of the great places in which to look for one's friends on the Riviera. It is of a certainty more crowded, more 'mixed' than it used to be, much more democratic. Very German and Czeko-Slovakian too. The best hotels of Nice are there and the most expensive, the Ruhl, the Royal and the Negresco. Each has its restaurant, its bar, its music; the Negresco has too its own Réserve, a name that generally signifies a restaurant built on the beach or even on piers over the sea, a restaurant in which there is a little 'park' of live shellfish. That of the Negresco is good – and expensive. Other hotels on the Promenade, not quite so modern, not quite so smart, and with lower charges, are the Westminster and the West End. From any of them, when the season is coming to its close, you can run in your bathing-dress from your bedroom across the road and the beach and into the water – unless you are afraid of a sea which has no tide to speak of and which spends its time washing the edge of a city. I bathed in that way myself – and enjoyed it, but I confess to a preference for water more remote from the crowded habitations of man. Oh, and I was almost forgetting one of my own favourite haunts, the Savoy, an hotel and a restaurant, with its little garden café. The Savoy occupies the building which was the Cercle Méditerranée, a club house famed for its gambling of which many stories are told. On its first floor is a restaurant which gives a beautiful view over the sea and where the cooking is good, especially if you take the trouble to order beforehand. For the Battles of Flowers the front row of tables on the balcony of that restaurant is a splendid vantage-ground. Seven years ago I addressed myself to the question of how a man should

spend his (and his wife's) first day on the Riviera, and I see that I then wrote that he had better spend it at Nice. 'Avoid the days of Carnival for your introduction,' I wrote, 'and if you wake, after arrival, on a wet, grey day, stop in bed, or unpack, or answer the letters you ought to have answered days ago. Don't go out and spoil your first impressions. But you can be pretty sure of a fine day. Then stroll on the Promenade des Anglais and look at the shops in the Avenue de Verdun. Lunch at the Savoy *if* they will give you a table at the window on the terrace overlooking the sea. Don't eat too much. A *mostele à l'anglaise* – the *mostele* is a Mediterranean fish – and the tiniest cutlet will be sufficient. . . .' With this meal I suggest now that you should drink a white French wine. After all, the years pass but things don't change so very much, and Victor Bethell, who knew all about such matters and who, I am sure, ate in his day more studied meals on the Riviera than any other man, used always to say a *mostele* for the first dish and a Carbonnieux for the wine. His Carbonnieux year was 1892. That prince of restaurateurs, Ciro Capozzi it was, I believe, who introduced the white Carbonnieux to the smart world. No other Carbonnieux year has been quite so good, I fancy. 1892! The wine-list of Le Petit Durand in Paris – that, by the way, is a restaurant too little known; it carries on with many of the same personnel the traditions of the old Durand in the Place de la Madeleine, Durand's in which Boulanger hesitated away a throne – that I have before me offers a Carbonnieux of 1923! One grows old!

After luncheon, if you choose, stroll again on the Promenade. It is not – perhaps it never was – the wonderful parade of fashion and beauty that one is led to expect, but

it will pass. As a background it is one of those scenes that do not disappoint at first sight. It has, as Sir Frederick Treves says, 'great dignity. It is spacious and, above all, it is simple. As a promenade it is indeed ideal. It is free from the robust vulgarity, the intrusions, and the restlessness of the parade in an English popular seaside resort. There are no penny-in-the-slot machines, no bathing-houses daubed over with advertisements, no minstrels, no entertainments on the beach, no importunate boatmen, no persistent photographers. If it gives the French the idea that it is a model of a promenade of the English, it will lead to an awakening when the Frenchman visits certain much-frequented seaside towns in England.'

You should also look at the view of Nice from the Jetée Promenade, the pier which sticks out to sea from the public gardens and which has its own smaller Casino where also they play boule and have pretty good concerts and a fairly good restaurant.

At half-past four go to the Negresco for tea – the Hotel Negresco – having first secured a table on the edge of the dancing-floor. Secure everything beforehand, by the way. Continue this rule right through your Rivieran visit – until, that is to say, you have made yourself known to *maîtres d'hôtel* by your geniality, the smartness and beauty of the ladies who accompany you, and by other means that will at once suggest themselves to the traveller who has had anything of an acquaintance with the restaurants and hotels of the world. If you do not in one way or another secure things beforehand you will too often find yourself tucked away in a corner from which you can see nothing – unless your clothes are exceptionally well made

and your women-folk are sights for sore eyes. I did not make this world!

Negresco's teas are very 'select', very proper. The professional dancers are very sedate; lounge-lizards and all, they look as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouths. But they do dance well and one is sorry when the super-professionals have taken their applause and retired and the guests begin to dance in their turn. But the guests, or most of them, dance well too, and have wonderful frocks and look so entirely untroubled by any serious emotions. . . .

I have told you of two or three expensive restaurants in Nice. There are others which are cheaper. There is Caressa near the Galeries Lafayette. And that large American professor and gourmet, Professor Hendrik Willem Van Loon, took me to a jolly Italian one, the Alfieri, in the rue Honoré-Sauvan, where I met also Mr. S. F. Van Oss, Mr. Montagu Glass and other distinguished men of letters. But I have to mention Mr. Glass in particular that I might have an excuse for telling a Nice story which I do not think I have ever seen in print:

Late afternoon; two simple and pleasant Americans, man and wife from the Middle West, from Indianapolis indeed, are discovered on the Promenade. It is their first visit to Europe and their first day on the Riviera. They know no word of French. To them enters Mr. Glass, who watches his countrymen as they attempt to extract meaning from the notices pasted up outside the gates of the Jetée. So obviously they are nervous of making a mistake. They must find out about it some other time, they say to each other.

Mr. Glass advances, and bows. Can he help in any



TOM VAN OSS
1927.

HENDRIK VAN LOON

way? The difficulty is explained. Oh yes, of course they can go inside the Jetée on payment of a few francs. . . . The little party talks. The stranger Americans are both so delighted to meet a fellow countryman, and they are so grateful to him for his assistance! And there is music – ah! they are so fond of music. They stroll and talk. At length Mr. Glass draws out his letter-case and hands his card to the American man. ‘That is my card. I too am very glad to meet a countryman. And since you are fond of music perhaps you would care to come up to my apartment to-night. We shall have some music. . . .’

Delight of the visitors. Actually – the great Montagu Glass! ‘Why we read you every week in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Fancy meeting you, Mr. Glass. This will be something to write home about. . . .’

Mr. Glass, pleased perhaps that his fame should so travel round the world, thinks to give them even more pleasure: ‘Then if you read the *Post*,’ he said, ‘you’ll be specially interested to-night. We’ve got George Randolph Chester coming in after dinner. . . .’

There followed a moment of constraint. Perhaps the wife plucked her husband by the sleeve, or nudged him with her arm. Actually how it happened I do not know, but she gave some lead: ‘Henry, I’m not so sure that we are free after all . . .’ She looked at him meaningly.

Henry was used to his wife’s tactics. It was true that they had explained at the beginning that they had no acquaintances in Nice, but he hastened to second her hesitation:

‘Yes, Mr. Glass, I’m afraid – I’m afraid we are not free. Another engagement. I’d forgotten. Perhaps another evening. Thank you *so* much,’ and before he had

realized what had happened, Mr. Glass was alone and the dear souls were fleeing down the fairway.

It took Mr. Glass weeks and the assistance of his friends to realize what had happened: These simple visitors from Indiana had been so often warned to receive the advances of strangers with the utmost caution. Confidence men, bronco-steerers, gold brick experts! Montagu Glass had caught them at a moment of unpreparedness. He was so kind, so polite, his assistance had come so exactly at the right moment. . . . That he should be their favourite too, the creator of Potash and Perlmutter. He had a card to prove it. They were willing to take him for granted. But when he added to their excitement the offer of the acquaintance of George Randolph Chester suspicion leapt to the mind of the woman. . . . That second great name was too much. Impossible! The man who invented 'Get Rich Quick' Wallingford and Blackie Daw! No, no. They beat a quick retreat. . . .

Anyhow, to resume, at the Alfieri you get good Italian food and wine. Another cheap restaurant I have frequented, where the *prix fixe* meal is generally goodish, is the Tantonville in the Avenue de la Victoire; and on the Quai des Etats-Unis, the continuation to the eastward of the Promenade des Anglais, are a number of embowered bourgeois fish restaurants outside which it is very amusing to eat *bouillabaisse* on a sunny day. If after lunch at, say, Faverio's you push on a little farther you see, on the Quai Rauba-Capeu, just under the beetling heights of the Château, the building in which W. B. Trites, an American novelist not half as well known as he should be, wrote *The Gypsy*. Other cheapish restaurants have been recommended to me. In time I shall try them all: the Bœuf à

la Mode; the Pommel, a fish restaurant in the old town, in the market indeed; the Chapon Fin, the Boulogne and the Taverne de Strasbourg. Oh, and another, the Chez Nous, a little Russian place in the rue Biscara, where an ex-officer and his wife feed you very well for eight francs. I think it is good, for it was recommended to me by a foreigner of taste and position who had taken the Viaticum at Monte Carlo – you shall know what that means by and by – but who had lingered on in the Principality and its neighbourhood, unwilling or unable to leave the scene of his disasters. It is sure that he knew how to lay out eight francs! A special word of praise for Bottin at 17 rue Pertinax where you get a great choice for thirteen francs! But go early – and drink, as Mr. Morton Shand and I did, the white *Chateau de Bellet*.

Even in Smollett's day (1764) Nice was a considerable town, but it has grown enormously. The novelist (after whom, by the way, a grateful municipality has named a street, as it should name one after Belfort Bax) says of it:

'The city of Nice is built in the form of an irregular isosceles triangle, the base of which fronts the sea. On the west side it is surrounded by a wall and rampart; on the east it is overhung by a rock, on which we see the ruins of an old castle, which, before the invention of artillery, was counted impregnable. . . . This little town, hardly a mile in circumference, is said to contain twelve thousand inhabitants. The streets are narrow; the houses are built of stone, and the windows in general are fitted with paper instead of glass. This expedient would not answer in a country subject to rain and storms; but here, where there is very little of either, the paper lozenges

answer tolerably well. The *bourgeois*, however, begin to have their houses sashed with glass. . . . I must tell you that presents of carnations are sent from hence, in the winter, to Turin and Paris; nay, sometimes as far as London by the post. They are packed up in a wooden box without any sort of preparation, one pressed upon another; the person who receives them cuts off a little bit of the stalk, and steeps them for two hours in vinegar and water, when they recover their full bloom and beauty.'

They do the same thing nowadays from all these Rivieran towns and villages, sending their flowers to England by parcel post or by rail, done up in box-shaped baskets made of twigs or in boxes of wooden openwork. Both the flowers and the carriage are cheap, considering. One has to choose one's shop, though. Some shopkeepers are not above imposing on the novice. In general it is best to go to the small shop in the small town. One soon learns. Thus, it often happens that one is treated more fairly in Villefranche and Menton than in Monte Carlo or Nice. Try to buy of the actual grower. Personally I have always been well treated by Sorasio in the Place de la Gare Crémaillère at Monte Carlo. Do not forget that you have friends in England who will find an exquisite joy in the arrival of a weekly panier of flowers. You who are under blue skies and who have flowers around you can so well afford, out of your pocket, out of your winnings indeed – if you ever have any winnings! – this pleasure for your friends.

THE NICE OF THE PAST

WHAT else must I remember to tell you about Nice? Perhaps I have written all that is essential. And yet Nice is very large and full of such a number of things that it does deserve as lengthy a treatment as it can be afforded. It is Nice's misfortune to be losing its character, to be exchanging, in fact, its beauty which was of several generations ago, its Italianate spirit and scene, best represented now by the Low Town and by the shady arcades of the Place Masséna, for the gimcrack architecture that, born years ago in Paris, has conquered the whole Latin world. There is nothing characteristic, nothing specially Mediterranean, about the Casino Municipale at Nice, or the new shops they are erecting in the Avenue de la Victoire, or the white hotels that are springing up on the Promenade des Anglais. And Cimiez? Well, its hotels and its huge apartment houses are no doubt comfortable enough for those who can afford to live in them, but from the pictorial point of view they contrast very unfavourably with the old houses on, let us say, the Quai Rauba-Capeu.

The character of Nice's population seems to be changing too, although in one respect it changes not. Now, just as in Smollett's time, the world it attracts is a very mixed one. It 'affords an asylum to foreign cheats and sharpers of every denomination', the novelist writes, but it is fair to remember that he was not always in good health or in good mood when he wrote of the town in

which he chose to live for two winters, and that sometimes, rather inconsistently, he lashes both the visitor and the native with all the bitterness of which his pen is capable. 'The shopkeepers of this place are generally poor, greedy and over-reaching'; 'the artisans of Nice are very lazy, very needy, very awkward, and void of all ingenuity'; 'here superstition reigns under the darkest shades of ignorance and prejudice'; and so on, and so on. No class escapes. The nobility comes in for a double share of censure. To quote these pages from Smollett at any length would only be interesting in so far as they represent a state of things which still persists or which, on the other hand, contrasts strongly with that which obtains to-day. In 1765, for instance, Smollett notes that 'here is likewise a pretty considerable number of Jews, who live together in a street appropriated for their use, which is shut up every night'; and again, 'the common people retire to their lodgings at eight o'clock in the winter, and nine in summer. Every person found in the streets after these hours is apprehended by the *patrole*, and if he cannot give a good account of himself, sent to prison!' In those days the town abounded 'with *noblesse*, marquises, counts and barons'. Some of them, however, could hardly maintain their dignity; some, reminiscent of Mr. Hardy's John Durbeyfield, had 'in this county of Nice' been 'reduced to the condition of common peasants'; 'a gentleman told me,' Smollett says, 'that in travelling through the mountains, he was obliged to pass a night in the cottage of one of those rusticated nobles, who called to his son in the evening, "*Chevalier, as tu donné à manger aux 'cochons'?*"' Compare this with Mr. Wells's analysis of the present day:

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

'Russian exiles, often with quite genuine titles, nobility from almost everywhere, countesses, duchesses, princesses divorcing or divorced, royal bastards (in profusion and with every degree of authenticity), ex-royalties, and even precariously current royalties are here, and only too ready to oblige. The Americans, they say, are particularly



generous and abject paymasters to such people. That is probably a libel on the Americans; there are merely more of them with money.'

An amusing passage from Smollett's memories is that in which he remarks that '*rouge and fard* are more peculiarly necessary in this country, where the complexion and skin are naturally swarthy and yellow. I have likewise observed that most of the females are pot-bellied; a cir-

'... ONLY TOO READY TO
OBLIGE'

cumstance owing, I believe, to the great quantity of vegetable trash which they eat.' That from a medical man! It would seem that some things were done in Nice in a spirit of unconscious prophecy: there was a certain freedom of sexual relations and, beginning with small things, the noble personages who frequented the public *conversazione* at the commandant's house 'played at cards for

farthings'. It is interesting, too, to read that although Nice was not in those days without variety of fish, they were not counted so good in their kind as those of the ocean. As a result of reading Smollett I have made a note to demand at the Réserve at Beaulieu or at Ré's at Monte Carlo or at the Negresco Réserve or at Caramello's at St. Jean, all of which places pride themselves on their local cuisine, the sword fish which was 'much esteemed in Nice, and called the *empereur* . . . white as the finest veal, and extremely delicate'. It appears that the sword fish was an associate of the tunny and was always taken in their company — but then, as far as I am concerned, the tunny fish is a Riviera mystery. What has happened to the great fisheries of tunny which were held hereabouts? In the eighteenth century the tunny was one of the industries of the coast; the King of Sardinia used to farm out the fishery of tunny at St. Jean-Cap Ferrat, and I know of a noble engraving showing the tunny fishers in the Bay of Bandol. But if the *empereur* and the tunny seem largely to have disappeared the *maquereau* has strengthened his hold on these coasts and, in one form or another, becomes commoner every day.

CIMIEZ AND MEMORIES

NICE has a marvellous hinterland which, as I have said, it shares, for the purpose of the motorist, with Cannes and with Monte Carlo and even with Menton, so that its chief excursions I will deal with in a later chapter. But Cimiez is, so to speak, a part, a suburb, of Nice. It is here, high over Nice, that Queen Victoria lived in the late winters of 1895 and 1896 – at the Pavillon, where a tablet commemorates her sojourn. Cimiez, thriving on regal encouragement, is now a place of giant and very modern hotels. If you have been sent south for your health you are likely to imagine that these caravanserais will be sufficient in themselves for your entertainment and that you will remain in their gardens, enjoying the high air and a rest cure at one and the same time, and that you will be debarred by the distance from going down to the sea-level to play baccarat till the small hours in the Casino. Apartment houses, rather of the modern American style, there are in Cimiez too. The Romans were the first to discover this hill-top as a place in which to live; Cemenelum it was called, and through it ran that Aurelian Way with which at La Turbie and elsewhere you will be familiar. Six centuries of the Empire had passed before Cemenelum lost its pre-eminence as a city of gaiety and luxury. Now little that was Roman remains – the barbarians, sacking Cemenelum and Nice, saw to that, and so did those later barbarians who used, as at La Turbie, the Roman monuments as quarries of stone for their Italianate buildings. Smollett rode up

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from Nice with a friend to see what remained of old Cemenelum. He described the place as 'altogether inaccessible by any kind of wheeled carriage. If you make shift to climb to it on horseback, you cannot descend to the plain again without running the risk of breaking your neck.'

The best English account I know of Cimiez is to be found in Sir Frederick Treves's *The Riviera of the Corniche Road*.

Another place to which the visitor to Nice may well go – he can even walk – is St. Sylvestre, a village in a valley of its own, three or four miles away from the Place Masséna, from which indeed you can go by tram, passing picturesque St. Barthelemy on the way. Neither of these villages is mentioned in the guide-books, but they are none the less interesting for that. Contrariwise! If you are a walker you must push on to the 'Dark Valley', and it would be a pity not to climb to the summit of the hill which overtops St. Sylvestre. A view! Returning, there is a special pleasure in being able to tell one's hotel friends that one has not been playing boule, or idling on the Promenade, or listening to music, but that one has actually been exploring the unspoiled country, penetrating to hills and valleys that neither Mr. Baedeker nor Mr. Findlay Muirhead has catalogued!

There is one place in Nice itself to which the visitor is always going but to which, if my experience is any guide, he goes at the end of his holiday or sometimes never at all. Indeed, it is in a part of the city which the tourist, the fashionable tourist, unless he have something of the artist and historian in his blood, may never visit except in the sense of making its roads a way of departure or of arrival. I mean the Château of Nice, rising on its hill

from the Low Town, to which I have already alluded in a quotation from Smollett. On its one side, in the angle formed by the sea and the Paillon river, are all the public buildings of the city, the Hotel de Ville, the Palais de Justice, the Cathedral, the markets and so on; and on the other, Port Lympia, the old port of Nice, which still harbours much trade and, in the fit season, many beautiful yachts. Under the Castle rock shelter old-world hotels which time has done little to change, and close by is that fashionable walk, the Cours Saleya, of which Sir Frederick Treves has written so pleasantly in his book.¹ Just in front of the Cours, remnants of the terraces which had their concourse of fashion before the Promenade des Anglais was conceived, are the little fish restaurants

¹ Smollett wrote of the Cours: 'In the summer, about eight or nine at night, part of the *noblesse* may be seen assembled in a place called the Parc; which is, indeed, a sort of a street formed by a row of very paltry houses on one side, and on the other by a part of the town-wall, which screens it from a prospect of the sea, the only object that could render it agreeable. Here you may perceive the *noblesse* stretched in pairs upon logs of wood, like so many seals upon the rocks by moonlight, each dame with her *cisibeo*: for, you must understand this Italian fashion prevails at Nice among all ranks of people; and there is not such a passion as jealousy known. The husband and the *cisibeo* live together as sworn brothers; and the wife and the mistress embrace each other with marks of the warmest affection. I do not choose to enter into particulars. I cannot open the scandalous chronicle of Nice without hazard of contamination.' It would seem from another remark of the novelist that these poor members of the Niçois nobility had some excuse for their lazy turpitude. They must have been infernally bored by life. 'The *noblesse* of Nice cannot leave the country without express leave from the king; and this leave, when obtained, is for a limited time, which they dare not exceed, on pain of incurring his majesty's displeasure.' I confess that I who love the South with a tried love and who could live on its shores for a very long time, summer and winter, would fret hugely if there were no open white roads stretching away to the North, no railway posters offering to take me to other shores. It is evidently out of that Sardinian king's book that Signor Mussolini has taken a leaf.

which I have recommended to the curious in such matters. The Château, the site of which looms above, was no mere ornamental dwelling-place for Nice's lord. Again and again it stood siege. Not till 1706, when Marshal Berwick bombarded and razed it to the ground, did the citizens decide that its site might become a park, a pleasaunce, rather than a fort. Visit it for its view; visit it for its memories; you may drive to it if its height makes you fear it as a walk. The most famous of those memories is perhaps that of Barbarossa's siege in 1548, and I like to recall the laconic answer of the Governor, Andrea Odinet, Count of Montfort, when called upon to surrender the town by the pirate from Africa – 'My name is Montfort'; the governor did not by his actions belie his name. The Low Town fell, was delivered over by Barbarossa and the French to rapine and lost no less than three thousand of its inhabitants by slavery – but the Castle held.

That we have passed through the Low Town and have looked so closely on the harbour, reminds me that in the eighteenth century, when Nice was of course so much smaller than it is, the King of Sardinia used to maintain in its harbours armed cruisers to enable him to enforce the imposition of a tax upon all foreign vessels below a certain size, which passed between the island and this coast; the Prince of Monaco, whose port is only a few miles along the shore, had the same practice. A bad day for mariners, that! But both puissant princes had their heavy expenses; there were no Casinos in which the foreigner could be easily separated from his money, no unavoidable zeros, 'un-après' or cagnottes out of which they could be defrayed. Nor had Nice arts or sciences.

It was in these respects, according to Smollett, 'almost a total blank. I know not what men of talents this place may have formerly produced; but at present it seems to be consecrated to the reign of dullness and superstition. . . . There is not even a bookseller. . . . Among the French, a Nissard piques himself on being Provençal; but in Florence, Milan, or Rome, he claims the honour of being born a native of Italy' – which reminds me that while I was being shaved in the first October of the Great War, near the Place Masséna, an extraordinary barber, who claimed to be a Nissard, assured me with some heat that the War was not popular in Nice; 'it is not *our* War,' he said!

By the way, it is a curious thing that neither Baring-Gould nor Sir Frederick Treves seems to have read Smollett's 'Travels.' If they had done so they would surely have quoted from a book so full of good red blood. Sir Frederick would have been able to explain so much from a reference to the novelist's pages. The great surgeon, writing on the Low Town, remarks on the unblushing frankness of its inhabitants, its pervading smell, its ancient, but still existing 'practice of throwing all refuse into the street, which has drawbacks but at least lacks the insincere delicacy of the modern dustbin'. A quotation from Smollett's twenty-second letter would have capped the surgeon's instances and shown the reason of much that is obscure. I forbear to quote; my reader no doubt has his own 'insincere delicacy'. As a matter of fact, I have always heard that the sanitation of no one of these large Rivieran towns is anything to boast of.

In one matter, however, the visitor to Nice in that older

time had a great advantage. Wine was 'good and reasonable'. Do you happen to know that pink Tavel which Mr. Boulestin when he first started in Leicester Square gave you 'from the wood'? He has it now, I believe, in bottle. Sometimes one can find it in even an English merchant's wine list – Mr. Downman's, for instance, but I helped to drink the last of the bin which Ledoyen in the Champs Élysées has not thought it worth his while to renew. Well, in the eighteenth century 'the wine of Tavelle, in Languedoc, is very near as good as Burgundy, and may be had at Nice at the rate of sixpence a bottle'.¹ Certain of the wines of the country are quite good, in particular *Chateau Bellet*, but in general the large hotels and restaurants in Nice, Cannes and Monte Carlo frown upon your drinking the wine of the locality. Like Basso-Bregailon at Marseilles, they do their best to insist that the customer shall drink wines that have come from afar. Why, they would try to make you drink the wine of Wales if they knew of its existence and could charge you enough for it! There is a big profit on claret and burgundy brought from a distance, and but a small profit on the wine which comes from the neighbouring vineyard. The visitor who lives in his own villa or his own apartment rather than in an hotel, keeps his own house, as it were, can get even in

¹ Smollett did not always think Burgundy 'good'. Writing from Lyons on October 19, 1763, he says:

'The wine commonly used in Burgundy is so weak and thin that you would not drink it in England. The very best which they sell at Dijon, the capital of the province, for three livres a bottle, is, in strength, and even in flavour, greatly inferior to what I have drank in London. I believe all the first growth is either consumed in the houses of the *noblesse*, or sent abroad to foreign markets. I have drank excellent Burgundy at Brussels for a florin a bottle; that is, little more than twenty-pence sterling.'

Monte Carlo most agreeable white wines in litre bottles at four or five francs apiece. This works out at something more than sixpence or twelve cents an ordinary bottle. A family I know drink it through every winter; in their case it comes from a small local grocer.

Touching the matter of bathing. Visitors to Nice do not take to the sea as early as do the people who go to Cannes, and perhaps Nice, whose shore is, as I have said, the shore of a large city and not scoured daily by heavy tides, is less inviting to the bather. I do not know. It has its bathing pavilions; on the Antibes side you can get away from the neighbourhood of houses. I have never seen anyone else bathe as I did by running across the road and beach from my Promenade des Anglais hotel. The water deepens very rapidly; one can swim. 'The people here were much surprised,' says Smollett, 'when I began to bathe in the beginning of May. They thought it very strange that a man seemingly consumptive should plunge into the sea, especially when the weather was so cold; and some of the doctors prognosticated immediate death. But when it was perceived that I grew better in consequence of the bath, some of the Swiss officers tried the same experiment, and in a few days our example was followed by several inhabitants of Nice. There is, however, no convenience for this operation, from the benefit of which the fair sex must be entirely excluded, unless they lay aside all regard to decorum; for the shore is always lined with fishing-boats and crowded with people. If a lady should be at the expense of having a tent fixed to the beach, where she might put on and off her bathing-dress, she could not pretend to go into the sea without proper attendants; nor could she possibly plunge head-

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long into the water, which is the most effectual and least dangerous way of bathing.'

All I can add to that is that it is a thousand pities that Smollett could not revisit the Rivieran scene and observe 'the fair sex' disporting themselves at Monte Carlo, Antibes and Juan-les-Pins to-day.

There is much tennis at Nice and yachting and much horse-racing.

CARNIVAL

ONE has an idea that Carnival is a habit of very old growth and that it must have flourished at Nice and elsewhere on the Riviera from the beginning of time. No doubt it has, but I do not find any record of its gaities in the pages of the observant Smollett. To Sir Frederick Treves it was, in its present manifestations, frankly abhorrent – its spirit ‘has grown into a coarse, unseemly monster, blatant and indecorous, surrounded by a raucous mob carrying along with it the dust of a cyclone. The humble village fête has become a means of making money and an opportunity for clamour, license and display.’ Yes, having seen several Battles of Flowers and the other joys of Carnival on many occasions, I am more than inclined to agree with Sir Frederick. The first time perhaps it is amusing – if one is young. But it is, at its best, a dusty business. Even the Battles of Flowers may miss suitable weather, and it is not a happy thing to see mimosas and violets so ill-treated. The young girls, daughters of rich visitors, are not so attractive in their decorated motor-cars, do not look nearly as pretty, as did the professional beauties, the daughters of Cytherea, of the last century in their beflowered carriages. Horses were more in the picture than are machines. La Belle Juniore was something to look forward to. Moreover, what with the *tribunes*, and the barriers, and the crowds, the visitor from the North cannot nowadays call the city his own at Carnival time, which is manifestly unfair considering how much trouble he has taken to transport

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his person and belongings. In those days I have seen the distinguished stranger lend himself to all the fun of the fair. Monsieur Maeterlinck and Israel Zangwill were my guests at one long-ago Carnival, and I can witness to it that the Jewish philosopher was not backward when the purchase of baskets of flowers and the pelting of engaging ladies were concerned. The Anglo-Saxon, though, is generally a rather shocked spectator. I recall one occasion on which I myself threw discretion to the winds and carried on a fusillade with violets for so long a time that I was separated from the party of which I was a member. When, later, I discovered my hostess, that dear Scotswoman, Mrs. G. W. Steevens, who lived at that time in the little villa at Beaulieu just under Lord Salisbury's La Bastide, she could not get over the fact that I had so far forgotten my austere control as to do as the Romans were doing. Her view was that you could observe but that you must not share. And at another battle, a very pretty young girl from America with whom I was carrying on a duel of confetti, was very severely taken to task by her escort, her brother: 'Please do not do that, Agatha. You don't know the young man!'

But the battles with flowers and the battles with confetti are nothing in their possibilities of confusion and distress to the battles with plaster balls. I believe their use is now forbidden, but that they are forbidden does not mean that they are not used. A scoopful of these balls delivered point-blank with vigour and good aim could, I should think, take the eyes out of the head. Much harm has been done.

My own feeling is that this sort of festivity is not for the large, crowded, democratic city that Nice has become.

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

The tinsel monarch, King Carnival, is no longer fun, although I may be proclaiming myself a 'poor sport', a sad fellow, in saying so. If you will observe his revels, do so from some favoured spot—the first floor or the garden of the Savoy Hotel, for instance, as I have already suggested. And yet – and yet there are still hours when one can find pleasure. The procession of cars on the Sunday night, for instance. Pray, though, for a day that has been, and is remaining, fine. Choose the Place Masséna for your place of vantage. A French correspondent of *The Times* has written the best description I have seen of all that the Sunday night has to give in gaiety and exuberance and frenzy:

'How is one to describe the merriment that suddenly takes possession of a whole people? To understand it you must have a picture in your mind of the purest sky, the bluest sea, the most dazzling sunshine in the world; you must remember that, from the four corners of the world, are arriving foreign visitors who, for a few days, mean to forget their work, their worries, and their sorrows and to recover the care-free spirit of childhood; above all, you must be acquainted with the Niçois character, friendly, welcoming, exuberant, to which laughter and a *galéjade* (as they call a joke) come as naturally as their golden fruit to the orange trees. In London or Paris a carnival of this sort would be artificial, strained, solemn, almost grotesque; at Nice it is in the blood, in the spirit of the people, in the tradition, it is a rite and almost a religion, it has all the intoxicating charm of the climate.'

Almost this writer convinces me. . . . Yes, I think, summoning my own memory of thirty years ago, he does. Since then I have seen a Carnival at Brighton! . . . No,

CARNIVAL

the English cannot do these things. The Niçois can; it is not his fault that there are too many visitors. As for the reference to Paris, I repudiate it out of my new enthusiasm and my old memory. Was ever a happier day than my first Mardi Gras on the Boulevard des Italiens and a happier night than that at the masked ball thereafter at which a little Swedish daughter of joy, who could talk English and had read English authors, talked to me for an hour about Captain Marryat and was, oh, so hurt when, deterred by my shy and uncomprehending spirit and perhaps by the leanness of my purse, I refused to take her to supper at the neighbouring Sylvain's!

There are still masked balls at the Nice opera, but no one has ever insisted on my presence at them.

One caution: in Nice at the heights of Carnival younger women should avoid the streets in which it is specially celebrated unless they are sufficiently escorted. At the time it is not amusing for a young girl suddenly to find herself separated from her friends, surrounded by a circle of laughing, singing youths and having to submit to being kissed before she is released! '*Embrassez! Embrassez!*' they cry.

By the way, the Niçois character, if truly described as 'friendly, welcoming, exuberant', has altered since 1764. Then it was noted that the Anglo-Saxons were 'looked upon with an evil eye by the people of Nice; and this arises partly from religious prejudices, and partly from envy, occasioned by a ridiculous notion of our superior wealth'.

Baring-Gould wrote of Nice as 'the vestibule to Monte Carlo'. It is more than that. Nice has always had its own place in the world since the dawn of history. Smollett was

not the first Englishman to take benefit from its sun – and his example was followed. Thus in 1802 an historian notes that certain English families, attracted by the climate, had installed themselves in the city and that the shopkeepers were already catering for their trade. One Risso, a chemist, went to the length of hanging outside his shop a notice in the English tongue!

And, finally, I will quote the opinion of a recent American writer – Mr. Herbert Adams Gibbons – in *Riviera Towns*: ‘The city charms: and it repels. You have been drinking in its beauty and its fascination. Suddenly something sordid, ugly, disgusting, breaks the spell. On the Promenade des Anglais sewage greets the eye as well as the nose. Not vicious women and poor little dolls alone, but cruel and weak faces, leech faces, pig faces, of well-tailored men – you watch them pass, you remember what you have seen at the table in near-by Monte Carlo, and the utter depravity of your race frightens you.’

EASTWARD FROM NICE

THE moment arrives, if you have paused at Nice, whether for a few hours, a day or a month, when you decide to go on towards Monte Carlo, that Monte Carlo which, whether your home is in an English provincial town or in some American Main Street, has been one of the names that have had a magic quality ever since they first came to your eyes and ears. Monte Carlo. Golden city of pleasure, city of luxury, of vice, city built to the Goddess of Chance. Well, get into your mind that it is not a city, that it is in so many ways rather a village than a city, that, at the most, it is a town. Do not, in any case, be in too great hurry to explore its mysteries. Great beauties lie between it and Nice and you may just as well make the most of them on the way. Too many people have reached Monte Carlo, have been entangled in its net, have lived its life from noon to the rise of next day's sun, and have had no time for beauties that lie outside its borders. . . .

When I first went to Monte Carlo I went to it by road, by the higher road, the Grande Corniche, from Nice, behind two horses. That was the way. One felt like an old Milord; one simply could not help feeling it. The open carriage drew up in front of one's hotel on the Promenade, the luggage was strapped on, and one was off, driving up the mountain-side, by precipices, by twists, by turns; the world spread itself out like a map. Could you see Africa over there across the sea? Of course not. But from La Turbie you might possibly see Corsica,

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and anyhow you might, like Tennyson, look down to where 'Little Monaco basking lay'. You can take identically this same road now; you can even take it by carriage drawn by two horses, but motor-cars are ill companions on this thoroughfare built by Napoleon. Therefore you are more likely to take it in an automobile which will make light of distance. Anyhow, my point is, if you are wealthy enough, go from Nice to Monte Carlo by road, and go by the higher road. So you will pass just under the domed Observatory that you have seen clinging like a decoration to the side of the Nice hill, and you will pass above Eze and wonder how it can exist there perched on its eyrie; and you will drive through La Turbie (where you can lunch at the *Righi d'Hiver*); and, seeing Italy as you drive, you will pass beneath Roquebrune and you will almost reach Menton before you turn sharply to the westward. You will come to Monte Carlo from the East. Do not let your chauffeur drive fast. The road does not lend itself to rapid progress. Fine drivers have been killed at its corners. Besides, you will miss so much if you hasten. Let me be frank, though, and add that you can, later on, take this same journey in a charabanc for, say, twenty francs, four shillings, a dollar! There are, however, people who shrink from the casual contacts of democratic travel.

I said a few pages back that there are now from Nice to Monte Carlo three magnificent roads. The one I have just urged is the highest, the *Grande Corniche*. Beneath it, at present making rather an ugly scar on the side of the mountain, is the *Moyenne Corniche*, built, or rather finished, since the War. Beneath it again is the *Corniche du Littoral*, which has the deadly defect of accommodating

EASTWARD FROM NICE

a very troublesome tramway system, but which is nevertheless the chief road artery between the two towns. If you travel much from Nice to Monte Carlo, then the lower way will become very familiar to you. It passes through all the little coast towns; it is close companion to the railway; it is always near the sea. Also it is beautiful, but beautiful in a different way from its superior sisters. For the sake of argument you may take it that the Grande Corniche is for great beauty and for memory; the Moyenne Corniche for calm — for the countryside has not yet become habituated to its existence; and the Corniche du Littoral for everyday traffic: use its tramways and you may alight where you will.

For my present purpose I will assume that you are continuing your itinerary and that you are either in the train or that you are in a car on the lowest road.

The train leaves the uninteresting station of Nice and soon plunges into the tunnel which takes it through the Carabacel quarter. It emerges in time to cross the Peillon river (which is generally very empty and dull: I, for instance, have never seen it full), passes through the sordid Riquier quarter, plunges again under Mont Boron, and comes out at Villefranche station. Villefranche, which does a great trade in carnations, is a place unusually attractive. Tom Van Oss has his studio here, for one thing. A small town climbing from the water up the side of the hill, it is at the landward end of the deep indentation which makes the Bay of Villefranche, the water of which is, in its turn, very deep too, so deep indeed that I believe it has been so far considered useless to attempt to make a large harbour of it, for it would be impracticable or impossible to succeed in the building of the

necessary breakwaters. If I am not mistaken, some years ago Mr. Paris Singer was actively engaged in promoting a scheme for getting over this difficulty by some up-to-date and American method. If the War had not intervened, the result would perhaps have been one of the finest and deepest and most secure harbours in the whole Mediterranean – and the spoiling from the pictorial point of view of one of the most beautiful of Mediterranean scenes. As it is, the almost land-locked bay is a favourite resting-place of the English and American fleets, whose arrival spells gaiety. Balls on board; balls on shore. . . . Last October at full moon I went down into Villefranche's narrow and obscure streets and alleys and dined in one of its little restaurants. An English warship was in harbour and I wished to observe the jollities of Jack ashore. At first no English sailor was to be seen. I was told that the crew had spent all their money. Certainly they had eaten almost all that Villefranche had in store. As in Cornwall, I had to be satisfied with a dish of eggs and bacon. It was dark when we emerged into Italianate byways in which the brilliant moonlight cast dark, sinister shadows. A sound of music. A café. Two or three score of English sailors listening to a woman singer, an old favourite of the ship, for she had, I was told, been brought back all the way from Paris to attract custom to the house. All very proper; an audience entirely masculine. Nothing Marryatish about it, nothing Rowlandsonian. 'Go down there,' a petty officer told me; 'you'll find 'em having the time of their young lives' – and he jerked his thumb in the direction of the quay. We went. More sailors – and young women. Such happy sailors; such pleasant young women. A wife in every port seemed

to be justified. Poll did not stick her arms akimbo; rather she smiled and was complacent and kind. . . . The ship sailed a day or two later. There was a waving of handkerchiefs from the quay, and, by the next train, all the damsels had departed for that wholesale entrepôt at Marseilles from which they had come. I was glad of the experience. An American ship was expected in a month. The same bevy of feminine attraction would be back at Villefranche – but I would not bring myself to observe it.

On the whole I was not surprised to hear that the officers' ladies who had put up at the Welcome Hotel the other day felt justified in complaining at the noise that kept them awake all through the night!

In Smollett's day at the base of the harbour just where I had sat under the Welcome Hotel was a basin in which lay the Sardinian King's two galleys:

'I went on board one of these vessels, and saw about two hundred miserable wretches, chained to the banks on which they sit and row when the galley is at sea. This is a sight which a British subject, sensible of the blessings he enjoys, cannot behold without horror and compassion. . . . [At night] the slaves lie upon the naked banks, without any other covering than a tilt. This, however, is no great hardship in a climate where there is scarcely any winter. They are fed with a very scanty allowance of bread, and about fourteen beans a day; and twice a week they have a little rice or cheese: but most of them, while they are in harbour, knit stockings, or do some other kind of work, which enables them to make kind addition to this wretched allowance. When they happen to be

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at sea in bad weather, their situation is truly deplorable. Every wave breaks over the vessel, and not only keeps them continually wet, but comes with such force that they are dashed against the banks with surprising violence; sometimes their limbs are broke, and sometimes their brains dashed out. . . .’

Those of us who have come out of Nice by the magnificent road which, passing Port Lympia, climbs Mont Boron, winds round it and then circles the harbour of Villefranche, may well be surprised to read that in 1764 the ‘road from Nice to Villafranca is scarce passable on horse-back: a circumstance the more extraordinary, as those slaves, in the space of two or three months, might even make it fit for a carriage, and the king would not be one farthing out of pocket, for they are quite idle the greatest part of the year’. Even fit for a carriage! Look at what the French engineers have made – without the aid of galley slaves! It is no doubt fair to give much credit to the Italian labourer. Before the War he was the chief builder, the chief road-maker of all this French, but once Italian, coast. Swarms of him came over the frontier at the prospect of work. Nowadays the labour question has to be solved otherwise.

Villefranche to-day has many new houses, villas most of them, but it is free of modern hotels. Many of the villas, especially those on the Cap-Ferrat, which forms the western shore of the bay, the harbour, belong to the English. Both road and railway ignore the Cap, cut across or through the neck of land and bring you at once to Beaulieu, a little town boasting a colony very British in its flavour. Sir Blundell Maple, of Tottenham Court

Road fame, did much to make Beaulieu;¹ he built the very English Hotel Bristol now operated by the Gordon Hotels people. The name of Gordon-Bennett is also one to conjure with; the American lived here for much of his time. One plays tennis in Beaulieu (one sees the courts from the railway-carriage window just as one runs into the station); and one uses Beaulieu as the starting-point for the superb walk which takes you by the Baie de la Fourmigue and then by a footpath to St. Jean, the village on the western side of Cap-Ferrat and the beginning of the secondary cape, the Cap de St. Hospice, which juts out from its parent as a smaller leaf juts out from the side of the larger cactus. It is even possible, with some trespassing, to walk round both peninsulas and to find oneself at the end of one's walk on the Villefranche beach. The tramway from Nice will bring you all the way from the Place Masséna to St. Jean, but it leaves the main road before it runs down into Beaulieu.

One should not hurry over Cap-Ferrat and Cap de St. Hospice. They have great and simple beauties and much legend is associated with them, as you will see for yourself if before and after your visit you read in Sir Frederick Treves. But Sir Frederick, judging by his book, would seem to have been insufficiently interested in food and wine, and there is one activity at Beaulieu and at St. Jean which he almost ignores. Both places are shrines of the good gourmet. Beaulieu particularly so, for on its shore at the Réserve one can have a better meal of the superior bourgeois kind than anywhere else in the world. But even as I write the word 'bourgeois' I feel I may be doing Mon-

¹ Sir Blundell's activities, I am credibly informed, have recently been surpassed by those of Lady Colefax.

sieur Lottier an injustice. Perhaps I wrote it because when I come to the Réserve from the more pretentious and never more pleasant restaurants of Nice or Monte Carlo, I order the simpler, the Provençal, the bourgeois dishes – the myriad *hors-d'œuvres* for which the place is famous, *langouste à l'Armoricaine*, *poulet Beaulieu* (they will give you *poulet Beaulieu* all over the world but never will it equal Lottier's, for it will lack the Beaulieu olives and the real Beaulieu secret) and *crêpes Suzette*. Once there were two brothers Lottier. When one was taken it was a loss to gastronomy; the other carries on bravely. An amusing place, the Réserve. A garden decorated, it is clear, with a large size lip-stick, a small hotel and a pavilion built out over the sea. Pray that for your first visit the day may be fine and still enough for you to sit in the open air above the breaking waves. They are friendly people at the Réserve – if you are rich and they like you; and the good-looking young man at the bar will make you a remarkable cocktail while the *vestiaire* looks after your needs. Here you will find what the fashion papers like to call a most distinguished clientele. Caruso is the name that comes quickly to my mind; he loved the place. I have seen the Duke of Connaught and Mr. Ben Tillett seated at adjacent tables. That jolly sybaritic socialist, Ernest Belfort Bax, liked it more than any other restaurant on the coast. The truth is that nobody, if he can help it, ever leaves the Coast of Pleasure without visiting Lottier and his Réserve. Do not expect the bill to be moderate. Most distinctly it is not. You are paying for the experience of a lifetime, not for a single meal. By the way, though, order that meal beforehand; do not arrive and order and then expect it to come up without delay from the kitchen.

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I believe I have heard of a *prix fixe* meal at the Réserve in which a relatively low price is secured by giving every one the same food. It must be, or have been, some temporary and unnecessary capitulation to the time-spirit on Lot-tier's part. Have nothing to do with it. Besides, if you do not order your meal beforehand you cannot expect to have what is technically known as a good table. Usually there is music at the Réserve; there was none at luncheon on the day I correct this page. A relief! There has in the past been dancing by professional dancers during luncheon — but that also must have been a capitulation. A fine cellar at the Réserve has two wines in which I am specially interested: A *rosé en carafe* which is very cheap and frankly comes from the hills near Nice, and, for years and years now, a Grand Bourgogne, so called, which is, I suppose, a speciality, constantly renewed, of the house. Certainly it does not come under the head of one of those *marques personelles* of which Mr. Morton Shand writes so illuminatingly in *Bacchus*. The *langoustines Armoricaines* that I had here in December, 1927, made that inclement month memorable.

So great has been the Réserve's success that some of it has spilled over on to St. Jean, which has less ambitious but quite good réserves of its own, réserves quite as expensive. Caramello's is the best of them and is well worth a visit. Caramello himself is a character. See him at his work. His place is hard by the harbour of St. Jean, where you look on fishing-boats and small ships and where people sing as they labour. Unspoiled. Over the harbour is what is now a large hotel, kept by an Englishman, with a superb terrace on which you can eat more simply and more cheaply than at the réserves, but well.

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Since it has grown it has altered its name, which seems to me both absurd and ungrateful, and I, unhappily, have forgotten what it now calls itself; but I do know that when I wanted to stop at it three or four summers ago I found that it did not open in the summer, which seemed absurd too. It is the sort of hotel which has very much grown out of being a local inn and the proprietor of such a place has surely a traditional duty laid upon him of remaining open all through the year. Unless one takes a boat and goes to sea, however, St. Jean does not provide good bathing. Nor does Beaulieu itself, for its beach is very full of sea-weed, so full indeed that unpleasant things are said about the smell that comes up from the neighbourhood of the little harbour in the Baie de la Fourmigue. Beaulieu boasts of several hotels, some of which are unnecessarily English – and there is a festive hotel at the end of Cap-Ferrat which, to be frank, I have never visited. And Beaulieu is in 1929 to have a great big Casino!

To me the great attraction of St. Jean and of its walks is that one looks back at the land across the sea; one faces the magnificent bastion of rock which forms Beaulieu's eastern protection and one sees as from a boat the steep fall of the Alps. According to Smollett, near to St. Jean, at St. Hospice, were some catacombs or caverns dug in the rock.

'The catacombs were in all probability dug, in former times, as places of retreat for the inhabitants upon sudden descents of the Saracens, who greatly infested these seas for several successive centuries. Many curious persons have entered them, and proceeded a considerable way by torch-light, without arriving at the further extremity; and

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the tradition of the country is that they reach as far as the ancient city of Cemenelion.'

Baring-Gould writes of them too. Myself I have neither seen nor been able to hear of anything of the kind. Still one knows that the Saracens had a stronghold at Cap St. Hospice; the Petit Fraxinet, it was called, in contrast to the Grand Fraxinet in the Maures.

By the way, if you have been lunching at St. Jean and there is a calm sea, it is very pleasant to take a rowing-boat from its harbour to the beach by Eze station, the Eze of the next chapter. At Eze you will find both trains and tramcars to convey you in either direction along the coast.

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THE train and the road, running practically side by side round Beaulieu's bastion of rock – by the way, the little collection of villas that fringe the shore at the eastward end of Beaulieu is known as La Petite Afrique – and, making for the road one of the most dangerous turns on the whole coast, find themselves in the small bay in which Eze is situated. But generally, you must understand, when people talk to you of Eze and its incredible beauties, they are thinking not of the cluster of houses round Eze station, and on the beach, but of the hill-village, Eze, which, if you have very good eyes, you can see high up the mountain-side, and which, having energy, good wind and stout shoes, you can reach from below by an intricate footpath. This little Eze by the sea would be the most beautiful of all the bays on the coast if it were not for the very persistent railway. Here, as there is room, the tramcar runs on a strip of the road set apart for it, an ironical fact since here there is no corner to make its presence dangerous. Yes, road, tramcar and railroad run along side by side for some half-mile, and it is the motor-car which goes fastest – by far. Before the coming of the tramway, before the coming of the motor-car, the old Pierpont Morgan, father of him who bought works of art and old brandy and was financial arbiter of Wall Street, and grandfather of the present head of the firm, was taking the air along this stretch of road in his carriage. A train suddenly arrived on the scene, and the horses, taking fright,

bolted. When at length they were pulled up the old gentleman was dead. His heart had long been weak.

Eze's villas have a discreet charm of their own. One wonders who lives in them. They have a neatness, a coquetry, in their orange gardens. They spring up from season to season on the slightest scrap of ground, on ground that a year before one would have thought inadequate for a gardener's shed. That one which is on the beach close to the station was for years the home of the kindest and the most amusing hospitality on the Riviera. Its tenant loved the Tables: the meal at an end, he would fret until he could put his guests once more on the road to Monte Carlo or Nice. What parties were given in that villa! Night after night its master would drive home in the small hours from Monte Carlo, his pockets often bulging with his winnings, and yet never once was he robbed. How well that part of the world is, or used to be, policed! . . . They tell a good story of a chauffeur at that villa. It was in the very early days of motoring. The employer had gone for a while to England. As he breakfasted in bed on the morning after his return, the chauffeur came for his orders and to make his report. There was nothing in the report; it was concerned with the state of the car only. After he had heard his orders for the day he paused:

'Monsieur . . .'

'Well?'

'I hope Monsieur will not be angry, but during Monsieur's absence I took the servants out for a drive. It was wrong and I regret it, and I hope Monsieur will excuse it. It shall not occur again.'

'Well, yes, I will overlook it this time, but understand

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it must not happen twice. I'm glad, though, that you had the honesty to tell me. You can go.'

'But, Monsieur . . .'

'Well? What else is there? You say the car is in good order. Nothing wants doing?'

'No, Monsieur, the car is going splendidly; Monsieur will be satisfied. . . .'

'Then?'

'Well, Monsieur, there was a slight accident —'

'An accident! What accident? This is absurd. You said that the car was all right.'

'Ah, yes, Monsieur, the car is well; the accident was not to the car. . . . It was to the chef. . . .'

'The chef? What's the matter with the chef? He went with you. Had a shaking, I suppose. The first time he'd been in a car, eh?'

'Yes, Monsieur, the first time. A shaking, yes, Monsieur.'

'Well, what of it? He's all right now, I suppose? It only shows you shouldn't play the fool when I'm away.'

'Yes, Monsieur. . . .'

'Go away now; I'm busy.'

'But, Monsieur . . .'

'What is it?'

'*Monsieur, le chef est mort.*'

My memory does not relate whether the chauffeur was kept on. He deserved to be, I think, if only on account of his delicacy.

Leaving Eze behind, the railway runs through a series of tunnels before it comes to Cap d'Ail, while the road, twisting in and out at a higher level, shows very much

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more of the beauty of the coast. By the way, I have forgotten to say that in addition to the tramway, and much more comfortable, is the service of Auto-Riviera motor-cars, Monte Carlo Casino encouraged, I fancy, partly open and partly closed, which plies along this road all the way from Nice to Menton. The train from Nice to Monte Carlo takes on an average forty-five minutes; the tramcar an hour and twenty minutes; a private car, say, half an hour; and these Auto-Riviera cars an hour. These last, however, do not take luggage – a small suitcase at the most. A single place cost ten francs, the cars starting from the Avenue Verdun in Nice, the first being at 9.30 in the morning and the last at 7.30. There are other charabanc services between Nice and Monte Carlo which pass this way.

But to resume – from Eze one gradually mounts, passing at one point, where the road makes a considerable detour in order to avoid a deep gorge, an old half-ruined château. No, not half ruined – but closed up, shuttered, a romantic place if ever there was one. Never since I have known it, thirty years now, have I seen sign of life within or near its walls, and standing as it does at the head of the gorge it has an air remarkably forgotten, remote, old-world and even ghostly. A château, this, which must have flourished in that period which Frederic Harrison lamented. Eighteenth century perhaps. I wish some one would tell me its story. Every other possible cottage or farm-house on the coast has been turned into a modern dwelling. Why has this mansion been neglected? The fact that in the winter season it enjoys but a few hours of sunshine cannot be sufficient explanation. . . .

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By the time one has reached Cap d'Ail one realizes that one is coming to some large centre: the character of the roadside changes; it becomes less cared for. Small shops, small cafés, dust. Only away to the right, seaward, where the Eden Hotel seems to be trying to hide its huge bulk in its garden, are the signs of the luxury for which one looks. That Eden, by the way, dominates a very charming bathing cove in which the water is of an unusual clearness. There are primitive cabins and a very unassuming restaurant, which, however, they are liable to close at what they consider the end of the summer season with disconcerting suddenness. But in this heaven one can do without the cabins and, at a pinch, one can do without the restaurant. The Eden is huge and there are other good hotels at Cap d'Ail, for the simple reason, as I have said, that people like to come here because, while they were within easy striking distance of Monte Carlo, whose casino indeed they can visit on foot between breakfast and lunch, yet neither the sinister name of Monte Carlo nor the suggestive one of Monaco figures in the address.

Not long after one passes Cap d'Ail one sees Monaco for the first time, the old Monaco, 'the Rock', the Monaco of the Prince, the Palace and, at its extremity, of the Museum of Oceanography in which is housed the famous aquarium. Before one reaches it, however, the road descends to the level of the railway in a little bay which they seem to be filling up as quickly as they can, harming thereby the picturesqueness of the place but adding much to its eventual economic value. You will see the opening of the tunnel right under the palace: it comes out on the other side of the Rock on the quay of

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the Port of Monaco, the Port of Hercules. Another economic fact, this tunnel! You will also pass a large brewery where they make the quite good beer which is drunk in the Principality – although you can of course get the English brands.

If you keep your eyes open you will, as you drive down towards the railway line, see on your right the stone which marks the spot at which you pass out of France and into Monaco, and you will see up on the left the large cemetery of Monaco which is so beautifully placed and about which so much nonsense is talked. Above it is the hospital of the neighbourhood, which is, if truth be told, a little behind the standard of what a hospital should be from the English or American point of view. It is quite a good idea to send up to that hospital any old books or magazines: they accumulate so uselessly during a stay of two or three weeks. Then, after some dull shops and dwellings, one finds oneself right under the side of 'the Rock' and of the Palace, not so very important architecturally perhaps but, from this point of view, romantic and infinitely satisfying to the eye. For a while thereafter, whether you are in car or train, you lose the sea and beauty, until suddenly you come out at the base of the harbour, seeing on the left, if you are driving, the little chapel of Ste. Dévote nestling at the foot of its gorge under the huge piers of the railway bridge, and on the right, the clear water of the port, carrying on its breast those beautiful yachts from the North which are the playthings of millionaires, and small motor-boats too which in suitable weather will take you on the jolliest excursions up and down the coast. The legend of Ste. Dévote is both curious and charming. It is told very happily, in archaic language, as

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an interlude in Mr. Michael Trappes-Lomax's novel, *One of These Days*.

Then straight up the hill – for you have just passed through the Condamine, the suburb, the town, that fills nowadays all the valley, the low ground, between the old town of Monaco, perched on its rock, and the new town of Monte Carlo. Precipices lie between, precipices against which little villas cling dangerously; in one of them that almost legendary beauty Lillie Langtry, Lady de Bathe, lives, caring for her rock garden. . . . Just as you approach the top of the hill you see on the left the famous Sporting Club, the 'Sporting', not a very ambitious building, the transformed villa of Monsieur Blanc as a matter of fact, and, on the right, the inadequate post office. Then the Casino looms up in front of you and, turning sharply to the left, you arrive at the Place du Casino, which alone gives access, unless you are in the company of the Prince, to the Temple of Chance. You are in the heart of Monte Carlo, that village which, occupying but a few acres, has made possible all the luxury of the Riviera, which has drawn gold from across all the seas and which, were it extinguished to-morrow, would make almost a dead land of the coast from St. Raphael to Ventimiglia.

Monte Carlo was put on the serious gambler's map of Europe on April 1, 1863, when Monsieur Blanc formed the Société des Bains de Mer et Cercle des Etrangers at Monaco. According to Baring-Gould, who seems to have a prejudice, unfitting in an historian, against the Papacy, one of his first shareholders was Pope Leo XIII, then only a Cardinal. From this fact – if it is a fact – may have spread the story that the Vatican owns a very large block of the shares.

COMMENCING MONTE CARLO: ITS HOTELS

I LIKE Monte Carlo. I do not like it as much as I did in 1899 when I first came to it, but that, I shall no doubt be told, is because I am thirty seasons older than I was. I do not think that is the reason. The whole Riviera is not what it was. It is different, and it is not better. I am not, however, concerned to maintain that it is less attractive than in the spring of 1914, say, but Monte Carlo, for instance, is certainly a less attractive, less amusing, and less intimate place than it used to be thirty and more years ago. It has become democratic, for one thing, and it has become much more moral. . . .

One sees the difference as soon as one gets into the Paris *luxe* at the Gare de Lyon. That train used to be full of amusing people, unmoral and amoral. As one settled down to dinner in the *wagon-restaurant* one could not help recognizing all sorts of celebrities, and most of those one did not recognize one could look at with curiosity and even astonishment. One did look with astonishment at Polaire, for instance – and Willy. But now that *luxe* is no more amusing than, say, the Scotch express. . . .

Still, here you are in Monte Carlo, and as you sip your first *apéritif* outside the Café de Paris you can look on a sea more blue than England has ever boasted, more blue in February than the sea of Kynance Cove in August.¹ In

¹ On December 17, 1927, the Sporting Club opened, and anyone leaving its green tables an hour or so after midnight found the snow falling heavily – and making attempts to lie. The next morning all Monte Carlo



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THE CAFÉ DE PARIS AT MONTE CARLO

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

London, you have just been told, there is fog and mizzle rain. But London is twenty-six hours away. You have already forgotten the grey sky of London.

You are at Monte Carlo and I will suppose it is at the hour of midday. Take Monte Carlo slowly. You are in front of the Casino. Look at its exterior. You will perhaps be too well acquainted with its interior directly! On your right is the ornate and successful vulgarity of the Hotel de Paris' façade, once the best and still, perhaps, the most expensive hotel in the world – but they seek to remove that distinction. Walk round the Casino and you will find yourself on the famous Terrace, Monte Carlo's one promenade. It will, if the day is fine and not windy, be very crowded. You will get a chair with difficulty. Your content may be rather spoiled by the unhappy noise from the pigeon-shooting ground which is just beneath, on the other side of the railway. *Chacun a sa cruauté*. It has been suggested that they should take this sport away to the other side of Mont Agel. The old Prince said it should not continue where it is, but, in this case, his will was not law – or he changed his mind. If one can forget the pigeons, one can find plenty to look at and much pleasure on the Terrace. Such a view! Old Monaco on the right – the view Mr. Tom Van Oss has painted for the frontispiece of this book – and on the left the green stretching length of Cap Martin, with the mountains of Italy beyond. And the people! Some of

in effect was covered to a depth of three inches; the trees too were heavy with snow. And on the ground was ice; ice too on the ponds in the garden. It was freezing. Such a thing had not happened for so many years that I could find no one who had experienced its like. And with it all a blue sky and brilliant sunshine. The snow lay on the ground for thirty-six hours.

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them so smart and so pretty. Some of them so *moche* and so plain. A few Englishmen in 'plus-fours' – of course! Adorable youngish women in the most provocative, successful and exiguous of frocks. . . . It is time to go to lunch.

Hold! We must get this thing right. I have said away back in this book that if you come out in the *luxe* you do not arrive at Monte Carlo until nearly one o'clock, and if by one of the *rapides* then one or more hours later. Most of this advice is for the novice and I do not imagine that he or she will be content, on arriving at Monte Carlo station, to hand over the baggage to the hotel omnibus and go straightway to walk in the sun and to choose a place to lunch. Neither content, nor costumed. Let us deal with this matter of an hotel first of all. I am not going to attempt to give you any details about their tariffs. They change according to the season and according to the demand. But I can tell you something of the relative positions geographically and socially of the chief of them. And you can write and make your own detailed inquiries before even you plan out your tour or your visit. Just as at Cannes the best hotel is the Carlton, and at Nice the Negresco or the Ruhl or the Royal – I have a very soft spot in my heart for the Westminster, but that is of an earlier, calmer, less hectic generation – so at Monte Carlo the best are the Paris, the Riviera Palace, the Metropole, and the Hermitage under its new auspices. In this world by 'best' is generally meant the most expensive. Well, I have just said that the Paris was perhaps the most expensive in the world. It has one unique advantage: it communicates by an elaborate system of lifts and of passages both with the Casino and the Sporting Club. In

one of the passages the insensitive habitué will point you out the very marks left by the blood of a suicide! I have no idea, myself, whether this is an authentic souvenir.

The less you say about suicides in Monte Carlo the better. It is not a popular subject. I have my own ideas about it, but I do not believe that the King of Sweden flourishing his stick as he walked the Terrace dislodged a few wood-shavings from a heap at the side of one of the shrubberies, thereby disclosing the hand of a corpse which had been hidden in this summary way until nightfall would allow of its disposal. The story was telegraphed to England. I like better the melodramatic flavour of the story told in a book by a German, Captain Weihe, who maintained that in the old days the bodies of suicides were thrust into holes and cracks in the limestone on which Monte Carlo is built, and had ultimately to be dragged out again because of the insanitary result! I should like to see Captain Weihe's book that I might judge of his credibility. I cannot even learn its name. This same gentleman has written a pamphlet on the alleged illegitimate skill of the croupiers. That does not predispose me in his favour as a witness to truth.

You need never go out of doors if you live at the Paris, if your chief interest is at the green tables and if you object to open air and the risk of rain. Curiously, the atmosphere of the Paris is rather calm. In its great entrance hall people sit about and drink tea and cocktails and read the very few and generally out-of-date papers provided by the management, but they do not shout or laugh raucously or dance. A bronze horse stands and extends its foot just inside the revolving door, and the gambler who touches that foot is supposed to propitiate fortune. Suc-

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ceeding generations of gamblers have worn it as the foot of St. Peter at Rome is worn. To the right lie the great and successfully ornate rooms of the restaurant, with which I will deal hereafter when I come to write of the culinary aspects of Monte Carlo in general.

If you live at the Paris you spend money, money in heaps, and every one in Monte Carlo respects you for a rich man or a spender: 'Oh, he's all right: he lives at the Paris.' At the Paris, however, no doubt as a measure of precaution in a town where the 'rich man' of the moment may lose all his money in a very few hours, they send in their bill, and expect it to be paid, every three days. Another thing that was, and perhaps is, useful about the Paris is that an almost official relationship exists between its management and that of the Administration of the Société des Bains de Mer — you know, of course, that the Company which runs the gambling at Monte Carlo and provides all the amenities of the place has as its chief concern the establishment of sea-bathing facilities, and that the Casino and so on are merely side-products of its energy! Well, if you didn't know it, you know it now: Société des Bains de Mer; Sea Bathing Company. Monsieur G. Fleury, one of the old and potent figures of the Principality, is responsible for the management of the Hotel de Paris, and he has had more than a little to do with all the social and other activities of the building at whose side and under whose auspices the Paris was built. If you want assistance, therefore, you only have to ask him or one of his lieutenants.

At one time the Paris was in effect the only hotel in Monte Carlo. It has grown and grown. It has covered rather more of the old-time garden space than was quite

kind of it. For instance, where is now the Nouvel Hotel de Paris used to be tennis courts. I seem to recall that once one could live there *en pension* at a ridiculously low figure – ten francs, *vin compris*, if I am not misinformed – and certainly in the last century they gave a table d'hôte dinner at long tables in a large room overlooking the Avenue des Beaux Arts for a bagatelle. Monte Carlo was simpler then. I doubt whether, unless you are known to be a millionaire, you can arrange to live *en pension* at the Paris now! All the same, the hotel can rise to an emergency: after the War had been going on for three months, Fleury, fearful no doubt of its effects on his approaching season, sent out a circular letter to those of his patrons whom he approved and whose addresses he knew; in it he informed his clients that the hotel had not ceased to remain open, that they would find the same personnel and the same comfort, and that the Council of Administration had decided to accept in payment of its bills cheques drawn on any of the great establishments of credit '*acceptés même pour la partie indisponible*'. I have never been able to ascertain exactly what these last words meant, but the whole letter certainly showed a great desire to be up and doing! Alas and alas, its confident assurance with regard to its personnel it was unable to implement. How many old familiar and cheerful faces one missed both here and across the way at the Café when the War was over! For the rest, one could tell very many amusing stories about the Paris and its corridors if it were not for the inhibitions of discretion. I have written a little about it in my novel *Caviare*.

Yes, the Paris houses most of the millionaires – certainly the financial millionaires and the great European

and American figures. The Metropole, one of the Gordon group, houses many of the others. It is at the Metropole that the British industrial magnates live, the captains of industry from the English midlands. The staff talks English to them; the furniture, or such of it as I have seen, looks English; the management is trained in the English traditions; its restaurants and its service are more in the English manner. Is that an advantage? Apparently. The place is full of the rich English. The position of the Metropole is admirable, but be sure you secure one of the higher rooms with an uninterrupted view over the sea. At the Metropole you will be nearish to the Casino and very near some of the best and most expensive shops – and you will find that the charges are very well suited to the clientele.

The Hermitage? It is rather tucked away and its best rooms get the afternoon rather than the morning sun. It looks into the Port of Monaco and across at the Palace and it is quieter than either the Paris or the Metropole. I have not eaten in its splendid restaurant for years and years, but Monsieur Benoist, then of Piccadilly, used to be responsible for it and the result has remained in my memory. The Hermitage is not so expensive as the other two. In this respect I should perhaps write in the past tense, for the Casino people have bought it. Some part of it, they say, is to find room for a larger and more comfortable Sporting Club; the rest is being brought absolutely up to date, renovated, made the last word in luxury and run under the auspices of the Casino itself. Its position as far as view is concerned could hardly be bettered . . . but its rooms, it seems to me, will not have much of the morning sun. Its restaurant is handsome, but

its lighting is fierce and a sore trial to the eyes. At tea-time it is thronged with dancing guests; professional dancers assist, and there are no 'attractions' in the way of sensational or attractive dances.

Then there is the Mirabeau, close to the station, at the side of the garden, under the Metropole, and with an uninterrupted view over the sea towards Cap Martin and Italy. It is well spoken of and is cheaper than those of the first group. In the summer it is the one important hotel, in addition to the Paris, to remain open.

When I was young the man who knew his Monte Carlo was as likely as not to live at the Grand. Its proprietors were Noel and Patard; Cesar Ritz had something to do with it, and Echenard. Its kitchen and its cellar were all that one could wish for. The like of that kitchen and that cellar we shall never, never see again. The mere thought of them brings tears to my eyes. I recall a dish of four little shoulders of *agneau de lait*. . . . Nowadays the reopened Grand is much cheaper than it was; it too has *thés-dansants*.

There are other hotels: the St. James's at the edge of the public garden, run, I think, by the Hotel de Paris people; the Prince-de-Galles, the Windsor, the Victoria, the Royal – near one another, with gardens, rather English and *en pension* hotels; the Helder, small and well placed: these are a few out of dozens. An odd little hotel of another class is Pistonato, right down at the edge of the sea in the new quarter. It had a proprietor who learned his trade in Saigon. He decorated his public rooms in a refreshingly Chinese manner. By the way, the villa, now called the Beaumarchais, between the Grand Hotel and that stupid building, the Palais des Beaux Arts,

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used to belong to Villmesant, the founder and editor of the *Figaro*, who in many ways acted as publicity agent, or even, shall we say? as suborner of the Press, to François Blanc in the early days of the Monte Carlo concession. He seems to have been nobly rewarded. Apropos, it is surely a very extraordinary thing that there is in the Principality, as far as I am aware, no statue or other memorial to François Blanc, the man to whom Monaco and Monte Carlo owe everything, and without whom there would very likely have been prosperity neither for its rulers nor its people.

And, last but not least, the Riviera Palace Hotel, which enables me to indulge in the paradox that when I go to Monte Carlo I need not live in Monte Carlo at all. For the Riviera Palace is above Monte Carlo, above Beausoleil. It is the big white building on the hill-side which stands out so prominently in every comprehensive view of Monte Carlo you have seen. All of its rooms look over the sea, for it is only one room thick, and nearly all of its rooms have their own bathrooms. The hotel takes you *en pension* or not, as you may please; and, because it is a considerable, if healthy, pull up from the Casino, it runs a service of every-few-minutes motor omnibuses which whisk you down to the Casino or the 'Sporting' in less than no time, and will wait about for you at the latter place until the tables are closed. The great advantages of the Riviera Palace are that, although it has its share of gaiety, it is wrapped away from the noise of the town and high above its smoke – not that there is much smoke in Monte Carlo! – and that you cannot run quickly back from the 'Sporting' to fetch more money if you are cleared out: the few minutes that it takes you to go up cools the

head and gives pause to foolishness. The gardens too, stretching their length along the hill-side, are as no other available gardens in the neighbourhood; there is a winter garden and an hotel garage at the side; it has a barber's shop of its own, and a good American bar. Sensible millionaires live here. Yes, I think that I can advise you to follow my own example. In spite of the millionaires it is not very expensive.

And now I hope, at one place or another, you are suitably and happily housed. If you have been wise, as your first important action in the Principality, you will have taken a bath. Then, as I suggested, if you lunched on the train, you will unpack your belongings. When ultimately you do sally forth, remember, as you value your health, that at this time of the year the sun soon sinks behind la Tête de Chien, that it will become suddenly cold, and that you will surely need an overcoat. You should in the winter half of the year *always* carry an extra coat or wrap for the afternoon on the Riviera. Gargle every night too and every morning if you want to avoid what is here called the Monte Carlo throat. I have found Tercinol a good French disinfectant. Apropos, there is such a thing as the Mediterranean fever. It is not often heard of in these immediate coasts, but it is as well to bear its existence in mind. Goat's milk is a carrier of its germ, I believe. Always boil your milk in these parts, although I do not see how you can be sure that hotel milk has been boiled. Personally I have a distrust of Riviera water, based on the inadequacy of the Rivieran drainage system, and I prefer to drink Vittel or Vichy or one of their fellows. I asked a doctor who had practised in the South for years whether I was

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unduly careful: he answered that he thought that people over forty-five were safe enough with the produce of the ordinary tap, but that certainly he would recommend bottled water for young people.

MONTE CARLO: THE DAY OF
ARRIVAL

I WILL take it for granted, for the moment, that, having lunched on the train, you have actually arrived at the station of the little town whose vices and whose luxuries have made it as well known as Paris or the Epsom Derby. Wherever men and women are gathered together you can talk about Monte Carlo and find ready listeners. Nowadays only Montmartre is its rival in notoriety. Your American, your Australasian, must be serious and intelligent indeed if he does not include little Monaco in his few weeks' European tour. It even seems to be coming the fashion to make certain by taking Monaco at the beginning. One comes to Marseilles or Monaco by direct boat from New York, or one comes to Genoa or Marseilles from the southern sea. Myself, I think poorly of these practices. They savour of extravagance. Putting things in their wrong order. See London first and Rome and Edinburgh, Oxford and Florence, have as long a time as you can spare in Paris, visit the Hague and Brussels – *then* go down to Monte Carlo, if you will. Your enjoyment will be all the greater if you have seen its visitors living their normal lives in their own countries. I do, in writing, take it for granted that Monaco is not your first taste of Europe.

The station of Monte Carlo is kept untroubled by the traffic of commerce. It is a passenger station only – and they deal with passengers with remarkable dispatch. Before you know where you are its polite porters have

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you and your suitcases, your coats, your umbrellas and your golf-clubs outside in the yard and you are looking for the emissary of the hotel on which you have decided.



THEY DEAL WITH YOU QUICKLY

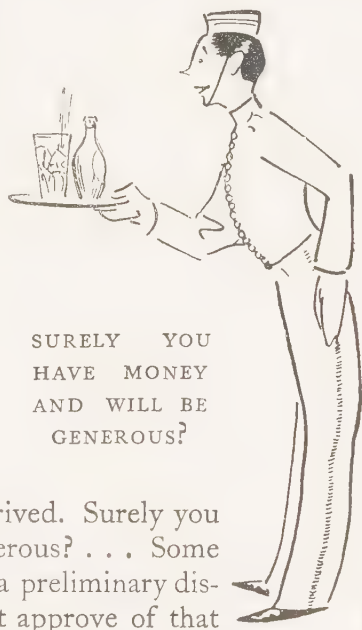
Should you not already have reached a decision, then I counsel you to leave your things in the *consigne*, the cloak-room, and to sally out to make your own arrangements. You will do so – in Monte Carlo, Nice, in all the world surely – so much more easily if you are not already com-

promised by having employed the hotel omnibus. 'No, Monsieur,' you will say to the polite hotel clerk who is trying to induce you to take a room without a view or on a noisy tramway route. 'No, Monsieur, I will look elsewhere before deciding,' and you can stroll away. It is an even more efficient method if you suspect that they want to charge you too much. Of course, one does run a certain risk: I did myself no good when I tried it on the hotel at Clermont-Ferrand. There were no other rooms to be had anywhere. After a while I returned: 'Yes, I will take the room you offered me.' It had been let in the meantime! My son and I slept on unbacked long benches in the open air of the station yard with our heads on our rucksacks. My advice to you is to adapt to your wishes the information as to hotels I have given you in the last chapter and to make certain beforehand especially in the first three months of the year.

The hotel omnibus will rattle you up the hill under the Metropole Hotel and then, almost certainly, up another hill, perhaps up a succession of hills. To drive for the first time to the Riviera Palace seems an adventure in itself. Have not the slightest nervousness. The brakes hereabouts are of a triple strength! As you drive, the hour being what it is, you see, if it be fine, laughing groups outside the cafés, or taking their after-luncheon coffee at the open windows of restaurants. . . . If your train is late, more people, after you have passed the first summit, are walking downhill than up: they are on the way to the Casino. Well, you arrive at your hotel. You like your room: no tricks have been played; it is according to specification. You fling the windows wide. The scent of the flowers comes up from

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the garden below. There is Monte Carlo stretched beneath you, and beyond it the broad, blue Mediterranean with, it is likely, a liner lying just off that white building which already you know as the Casino. Ecstasy! Surely it was more than twenty-four hours ago that you left London. A first unpacking takes but a little time. The lifting out of a frock or a suit for immediate wear; if you are a woman, the hanging up of more exciting clothes for the evening. A bath. . . . You will want your hair washed after the journey: the maid or the valet will arrange an immediate appointment for you, either in the hotel or in the town. Difficult, troublesome, things are made easy. You are newly arrived. Surely you have money and will be generous? . . . Some people propitiate the fates by a preliminary distribution of largesse. I do not approve of that as a practice. It starts by putting what should be a pleasant relation on too commercial a basis.



SURELY YOU
HAVE MONEY
AND WILL BE
GENEROUS?

There is one thing that you must get into your head and which in planning walk or excursion you must never forget: the sun in these late winter months sets very early and very rapidly in Monte Carlo. Stand with your back to the sea and look at the mountains. That great bluff

of rock to the left which dominates Monaco and the Condamine is the Tête de Chien. It interposes itself between the Monégasque and the afternoon sun and so, while Nice and Cannes and Antibes and Menton are still in sunshine, the wise visitor to Monte Carlo is drawing his cloak more closely around him. I have told you this before. I repeat it with intention. Neglect of the certain fact that the fall of the temperature at sunset is both great and sudden will expose you to a considerable risk. The beautiful cemetery under that same Tête de Chien is full of people who were careless or thought they knew better. . . .

I do not know where you are stopping, so I cannot trace with you your first walk in the Principality. Most of the hotels of importance, with the exception of the Riviera Palace, are in Monaco, and nearly all of them lie inland of the Casino. Learn that the Principality comes to an end not very many paces north-west of the Casino gardens. At that point begins Beausoleil – in France; and in Beausoleil is the chief Monte Carlo branch of the Crédit Lyonnais, and the station of the rack-and-pinion railway which later on will take you up to La Turbie on the mountain. Here also is that Beausoleil Casino which Monsieur Camille Blanc found such a thorn in his flesh that hardly was it started than he bought it out. It was a clever idea of its promoters. A kind of polite and legal blackmail. In these recent years Beausoleil and Monte Carlo are with difficulty to be separated and some smart fellow conceived the plan of building in Beausoleil, a quarter of a mile, say, from the Casino itself, a French casino in which, although the peculiar games Monte Carlo has made its own, trente-et-quarante and roulette,

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could not be played, yet baccarat could and its sister, chemin-de-fer, and boule. I seem to remember that for a brief while it enjoyed a not inconsiderable popularity, especially late at night after the closing of the Rooms. The building held quite a decent restaurant and a music-hall, and the habitual gambler found it a pleasant change to go there and take a bank or to play against the bank of some one else. In those days the Casino itself had no such attractions. Well, Monsieur Camille Blanc saw money to which he felt he himself and his shareholders had a prescriptive right going into alien pockets. There were negotiations. The Casino of Beausoleil ceased to function as a place of serious gambling and all was well. Look at the building. Certainly it does not look as if it would be a very formidable rival to Monsieur Blanc's white and sun-bathed palace. Now again they play boule within its walls, and even baccarat and chemin-de-fer, after midnight, but I do not think they provide any large banks. In the same neighbourhood is the Capitol, an ambitious and larger building, designed as a music-hall. It is rather a white elephant nowadays. Much money has been lost in trying to make a success of it. Every now and then the Société has used it for some special attraction. Once in his heyday Georges Carpentier fought the Belgian champion within its walls. The minor bouts had more interest. One could not help feeling that 'Georges' was not taking the afternoon seriously when one saw him, half an hour before the show began, strolling away from his lunch at Ciro's, with a cigarette between his lips. Yes, he won the match, but . . .

You wonder perhaps why the Crédit Lyonnais established itself in France rather than in Monte Carlo, why

it should have chosen in those days to subject its clients to a walk of a quarter of a mile. The reason is simple. When Monte Carlo first showed signs of becoming a success, when it seemed likely that it would be worth somebody's while to start a bank within its confines, the Prince gave a certain Mr. Smith, an Englishman, the concession, on the understanding that for a term of years no one else should be allowed to carry on a similar business in its neighbourhood. So when the *Crédit Lyonnais* wanted to start it was forced to post itself over the frontier! Smith's Bank flourished exceedingly. It stood, as its successor stands, at the corner of the *Galerie Charles-Trois*, on the way to *Ciro's*, and close to the *Casino*. A very jolly old chap used to manage it, a Mr. Childers, and Victor Bethell, his deputy and successor, whom I have already mentioned, was the worldly guide, philosopher and friend of all the English in Monte Carlo, carrying on indeed until his death last year, even when the Bank itself had been sold to the French *Comptoir d'Escompte*. Victor Bethell was a character. He is missed in Monte Carlo. I have often wondered why his friend William Heinemann never republished his two excellent little books, *A Fortnight at Monte Carlo at the Expense of the Bank* and *Monte Carlo Anecdotes*. They are hard to find nowadays and in some ways out of date, but they were very well done. By rights 'V. B.' should have written this book. His head was full of memories.

Of course, 'Smith's Bank' no longer has things all in its own hands. With the passage of years the concession of the original Mr. Smith expired and now this part of the Principality is as full of banks as a bun is full of currants. Barclay's and Lloyd's both have regular

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branches; but I think I am right in saying that no American bank as such has established itself. By the way, leaving on one side the proximity of the Casino (and no one engaged in business in the Principality is allowed in the Rooms, a rule kept pretty strictly), these banking posts at Monte Carlo ought to be very much run after by juniors. Two things at least they give a young fellow: a chance of learning the French tongue and the foreign exchanges, the second being the one thing that Lord Goschen, in spite of his book on the subject, or some one of his financial eminence, described, to use Lord Dundreary's words, as a thing that 'no fellow could understand'. In these Monte Carlo banks they work, except in the high season, no longer than they do in London, there are many fête-days, and the luncheon interval lasts a couple of hours. At the bathing-place a mile away, I met on the raft this morning on which I write, in mid-Mediterranean, so to speak, between Larvotto and Carthage, a friend of mine, a bank clerk. Closing his ledgers at midday he had had time to come down, to swim out, to amuse himself in the water and in sun-bathing for half an hour or more, and yet to get back, to lunch and to be at work again at two o'clock. Better than Cornhill, that! And in the long evening hours of the summer your bank clerk can have tennis to his heart's content at the Club – if he plays a decent game and can get the necessary introductions. But to return. There in front of you you will see the Casino. If you have not an appointment with the hair-dresser I suppose you will insist on visiting it without loss of time. Nothing that I can write will prevent your hastening to become free of its privileges.

Nowadays, on the principle of charging for everything that can be charged for, you are not, as you used to be, free of the Casino. To-day no one in the Principality gives you a ticket for anything without charging for it! Things have changed, and not altogether for the better, since the passing of the Blanc regime. You must, if you design to enter the Rooms as soon as the formalities will allow, walk up the Casino steps and pass to the right into the cloak-room, where you will leave your hat and stick and overcoat if you are a man, your parasol or umbrella if you are a woman. A woman may wear her mantle, her cloak, into the Rooms; a man may carry his hat under his arm. No one may carry a parcel up even the steps of the Casino. There is a special place of deposit for parcels a little to the left of the steps. According to Mr. Charles Kingston's *The Romance of Monte Carlo* – a good book with reproductions of photographs which show Monaco, the Condamine and Monte Carlo as they were before gambling had raised the Principality into a resort of nations – the Blancs had a perfect horror of bombs. The cloak-room used to be free; nowadays it costs a franc for the day, a stupid, irritating innovation. 'All the traffic will bear'! Well, your things deposited, you go to the opposite room and apply for a card of entrance to the *salles des jeux*, the Rooms. You show your passport, or you give them all sorts of particulars about your nationality and your home town and swear you will bring your passport on the morrow, and you are then given a ticket for one day, for one day only, at a charge of ten francs. You go through the same performance the next day and, I fancy, even another, after which you may be given, again against payment, a *carte blanche*, a white

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ticket, which will admit you for a month. It does seem ridiculous, doesn't it? to make so much fuss, and to charge you money, stupid, irritating sums of money, for the privilege of going in and very likely losing all you have on you.

Having achieved a ticket, and if there is still sunlight, you will be wise if, even though you have left your things in the cloak-room, you think better of your intention, retrieve your belongings, and turn round and go out into the fresh air. You are sure to want to go into the Rooms after dinner. Besides, I will tell you a few pages hence about the *Salons Privés* and the International Sporting Club, known colloquially as 'The Sporting'. It is more or less necessary to have this first ticket, but you are under no obligation to use it. Indeed, even though you be a furious gambler there is no need, unless you insist on playing in the morning, when there are so many better things to do, to enter these more public Rooms at all. Superior persons have rather unpleasantly taken to calling them 'the Kitchen', which is absurd, when you come to think of it, since all through Europe and America there are worthy and pleasant, if slightly self-righteous, people who describe Monte Carlo itself as 'that sink'! In the old days the Rooms were the only rooms. That was before the days of charabancs and cheap fortnights on the Riviera. There were no inner chambers – except sometimes, in the high season, after the ordinary closing hour, upstairs, where the reading-room now is, a room for men only. In fact, with that exception, you either went into the Rooms as they now are or you could not gamble. You met all your friends there. They strolled about and exchanged greetings and watched a coup or two being

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played even though they themselves never risked a franc. Everybody – nearly – was well dressed. And in the evening! After dinner the Rooms were a sight for sore eyes – if you liked to see beautiful women beautifully dressed, huge, exquisitely poised hats (women wore hats in restaurants and in gaming-rooms in those days, wonderful though it may seem!), the glitter of priceless or false jewels, and men in what the common novelist calls ‘faultlessly cut dinner jackets’. There were no counters in that far-away time – I write of thirty years ago, before the South African War, the crescent period of Britain’s extravagant success – and one walked amid a noise as of a sea of gold breaking on a beach of green cloth and with the rustle of bank-notes sounding like the flutter of autumn leaves. Nowadays all that is over. Counters have taken the place of gold and, generally, of notes. In the *Salons Privés* here you need not dress even in the evening. But you must dress for the ‘Sporting’ after dinner. That is a definite rule. Time was, of course, when the sumptuary laws of the Société were very strict. You were not allowed to enter the Rooms with your trousers turned up! Lord Salisbury, the old, great Lord Salisbury, came over one day from his villa above Beaulieu, La Bastide. The gentlemen in black who stand at the actual entrance of the gambling-rooms, look at your ticket until they know you by sight, and subject you to a careful scrutiny, turned him from the door. His trousers were turned up. Or was it that he was wearing brown boots? The authorities later on heard what had happened. The English Foreign Minister, Prime Minister perhaps, refused entrance! What might not happen! Alarums. Apologies. A commission of regret was sent to Beaulieu. I do not know whether it was effec-

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tive. By the way, you will spare yourself a petty mortification if you remember that, entering the gambling-rooms, you take the left-hand door if you have only a daily ticket, that the right-hand door is reserved for habitués, holders of monthly tickets or of cards for the *Salons Privés*, and that the centre door is for people coming out.



CONCOURS DE JAMBES

Yes, nowadays things are slacker. This last summer women were allowed into the Casino with bare legs, without stockings, that is to say. Such a thing had never happened before. Never. Perhaps they realized, the authorities, that their doorkeepers would have to have uncommonly sharp eyes to be certain that a woman was not wearing stockings, and made the best of an unfortu-

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nate position. Still, however, I fancy, a man must wear socks. He cannot, however well lined his pockets, saunter into the Rooms with nothing but rope shoes, *espadrilles*, on his feet. And he must wear a coat and a tie. He cannot affect the loose rolling collar of Lord Byron and the young tennis player. But I will put you wise: one of the Casino porters carries in his pocket half a dozen ties; he will for a consideration lend you one of them for an hour or two.

I should slightly extend what I wrote just now about your first ticket of admission. If you choose to join the *Salons Privés* straight away and are willing to pay the higher scale of admission, you can almost certainly (if you have an air of respectability!) secure a card for a month (200 francs), for the season (500 francs), for the year (800 francs), without any more vexatious formality than the showing of your passport. And since to secure a ticket for the 'Sporting' a *Salons Privés* ticket is a condition precedent, perhaps, if you are intending to spend more than a few daylight hours in the Principality, you had better take one without delay. It will save you trouble, and certainly the *Salons Privés* are very much less crowded and more agreeable than the ordinary Rooms. Also you can smoke in them. And here only within the walls of the Casino is it possible to play *chemin-de-fer*.

Well, I assume, no doubt mistakenly, that you have halted on the threshold and are safe and sound and with your money still in your pocket in the Place du Casino, the 'Camembert', 'cheese', or 'fromage', as the ugly slang of the place has it. This is the time to look again at the façade of the Casino. It has neither dignity nor nobility, but I

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suppose it has a certain beauty. Sarah Bernhardt is said to have designed the figure on the left. Or was it that on the right? It does not matter. No future New Zealander will treasure these sculptures in any municipal museum of importance. The artist should, publicly at least, stick to his own proper art.

That part of the Casino that immediately faces the Place is the old, the original part. You can see a picture of what it used to look like, half a century ago, in Mr. Kingston's book. Presumably since then it has suffered change but has not been altered integrally. Like Buckingham Palace, it has had its face done up. Charles Garnier, the architect of the Paris Opera House, was its inventor. One need not be surprised. Garnier was the architect for much grandiose work in those days, and it may be presumed that François Blanc admired his Paris achievement, since he himself contributed no less a sum than a million francs to the Opera building. And really when one comes to walk round the now much larger Casino – it has spread out to the east – one doubts whether, granted the taste of the time which saw its inception, one could have done very much better oneself if one had been in François Blanc's shoes. Look at it from the sea, from that famous terrace I have written of already. Certainly it is a little niggling. That applied colour has no strength, no vigour. I wonder what one of the extreme modernists would have done with the site. Or suppose, for an instant, that the present Casino were to be swept away in a night and Sir Edwin Lutyens were asked to design a temple to Chance, or the firm of McKim, Meade and White. . . . Sir Edwin has already left his mark on these coasts. The villa with the peacock-hued roof on Cap-Ferrat is

his, I believe, and there are others for which he was responsible.

I have no idea who was the architect of the Hotel de Paris, the large building on the right of the Casino, to which, indeed, as I have said, it is joined by a subterranean passage in order that its delicate guests need be under no necessity of encountering the night air. The same benevolent principle should cause it to provide gas-masks for use in the Casino both in the public rooms and in the 'Sporting' during the more crowded season. Not that the ventilation is as bad as it was. . . .

The Paris has been like an octopus; it has covered much space that old-timers knew as a pleasant garden. One hopes that it may decide to rest content on the ground that it has covered. All Monte Carlo is, as I write, in a furious period of transition, and it will be interesting to see what happens in various directions, not least in the experiments in hotel-running on which the Casino has embarked. Old Madame Blanc managed the Paris in those first years of struggle, and it should be easy for the Casino authorities to resume the helm. But what of the Hermitage? An hotel requires a personality at its head. Kraemer at the Carlton in London was such a man, as was Autor his predecessor. The great hôteliers and restaurateurs would seem to be born rather than made. Luigi Naintré has, and Rizzi had, the gift. In Monte Carlo Albertazzi of the Riviera Palace has it. The question is, will the Hermitage be able to produce another Ritz, another Ciro Capozzi? Will it be able to revive those old gastronomic glories of the Paris in its heyday, of the Grand and of Ciro's? Or will it take the decadence of the Monégasque kitchen for granted, be content with things

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as they are, and provide, instead of superb *plats*, more and more 'attractions', 'surprises', *cadeaux* and celluloid balls? I have my doubts. We live in a vicious circle. There is a shortage of gourmets and to make hotels like the Paris or the Hermitage pay handsomely it is not the *fin gourmet* that is wanted so much as the very rich *gourmand*. In other words, guests such as the author of *A Shropshire Lad*, will never in the large modern hotel be as welcome, as much considered, as the richer compatriots of Mr. Mencken and the wealthy new-comers from the English manufacturing towns. True, the American can no longer emulate the late Mr. Pierpont Morgan, who used like a second Barbarossa to descend on these shores in his yacht and, after a brief space, to depart with the hold full, not of bright-eyed and clean-limbed young Monégasque virgins and boys, but with bin after bin of all the best and the oldest vintages. What good brandy the Paris must have had before the American buccaneer chieftain discovered its qualities. . . . I understand that the Administration is nervous that hotel prices are so high in Monte Carlo that their acquisition of the Paris and the Hermitage, and the other purchases that they contemplate, are with the idea of bringing prices down. Things do not generally work that way! Rich people will pay large prices for what they want – but they do not like to feel that they are not getting what they want.

But to return: they used to say, in those good, old immoral days that are now gone for ever, that the Paris clients were divided into three classes, split up into the three parts of the hotel. At one end were lodged the family visitors, the very respectable; in the middle were the bachelors; at the other end the young ladies. . . . I

do not know if it is true. Anyhow, there are now many fewer young ladies of the kind that found the fine hotels of Monte Carlo a happy field for their activities. The reason is economic. In the last century, before the three wars, in a crescent scale, dissipated the wealth of the Old World, the young lady could afford to take risks, to remain unattached, to be a free-lance. Always she would find some kind of gentleman ready to fall a victim to the graces of her face and of her person. Young ladies at the beginning of the season descended on these shores in flights. They resembled the birds or their 'commoner' sisters in the same profession at Villefranche in the regularity of their passage. And they were like some birds in the beauty of their raiment, like the more beautiful birds or like butterflies. But with the War the unattached gentleman became less easy to find. Young gentlemen? — they had to work; their fathers could no longer support their prolonged follies; they were put on strict allowances. Feminine temptation had to be resisted . . . and the young lady or her advisers soon learnt that the only safe thing to do, the only thing that promised lengthy security, was to attach herself to the father rather than the son, to be content, in her turn, with an allowance more or less in keeping with the position of her protector. She was no longer able, except in the unhappy case of the loss of her situation, to descend alone by the *luxe* on Monte Carlo. If she comes south at all she comes in the society of her elderly friend and she leads, has to lead, a very sober and restrained life. At the same time I must confess that with each of the very recent seasons there has been a certain return to the old Monte Carlo norm. To hasten this process one of the proposals, very seriously advanced, is

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that the authorities should send to each of the great European capitals a Commission to search out the most beautiful of the daughters of Cytherea, and that they should be invited to spend a season in the neighbourhood of the Casino, during which their hotel bills would be defrayed by the Administration. Yes, the proposal has been seriously made, and I have, it is fair to say, no reason to suppose that it is not being seriously considered. Its champions maintain that only in this way can Monte Carlo's old supremacy be regained. It was on the same principle, I believe, that Cornuché ran Maxim's in the rue Royale, although observation leads me to suppose that his successors in Paris have shed some of his old energy in this respect.

The fact remains that Monte Carlo is to-day a far less adventurous place in which to live. The pace is set by the rich and respectable bourgeois rather than by the butterfly and the spendthrift. The ant has triumphed. The cynics put forward another reason: they say that the professional has been killed by the amateur. I should not be surprised if there was something in the suggestion. And yet, in spite of all this, Monte Carlo has a moral standard of its own. It frowns severely upon certain vices which Paris, that older resort of pleasure, certainly tolerates, and London and New York are powerless to suppress. It frowns upon them so much indeed that their practitioners, unless they are very discreet, had better stay away from the Principality. It is dangerous ground.

Facing the Hotel de Paris is the Café de Paris. It belonged to the same company. There are new arrangements. The Hotel certainly has been sold to the Casino. One of the changes that worry one. The kitchen of the

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Café was a pale reflection of that of the Hotel; it drew on the same cellars. Every Sunday there is a *diner de gala* in the Hotel, every Saturday in the Café. That in the Hotel is the more expensive, the more select (if anything is select



AMATEUR v. PROFESSIONAL

in Monte Carlo!). The 'turns', the 'attractions' in the Hotel are better. They have even been known to spoil what might have been a passable dinner with a whole Russian ballet. However, the Café does quite well in its own way for those who like gala dinners. In the morning on warm days it is the thing, after walking on

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the Terrace, to sit and to drink one's *apéritif* outside the Café at one of that congregation of little tables that stretches almost to the Casino doors. A very jolly place at midday. Everybody who is in Monte Carlo, whether for an hour or for the season, passes under the eyes of the seated gossips. You watch the gamblers enter the Casino; you see them emerge. Motor-cars perambulate slowly. One hears all the gossip. Now that the Café is under the direction of 'Humberto', until recently the director of *Ciro's*, a man who does really understand his job – *Ciro* told me so himself – it is likely to improve. He should see to it that his people can provide a decent sherry suitable to the English palate, and surely they might, in these democratic days, offer one that simple and pleasant *apéritif*, a *Cap Corse*.

From the point of view of the cocktail expert there are, however, better places – the American Bar of this same Café, or the Royalty Bar, which is just now, and with reason, the one smart rendezvous at midday; you will find it at the head of the gardens, slightly to the left, up the steps which lead to the Park Palace, an 'apartment house' which has some of the most attractive and expensive flats in Monte Carlo.

Since they gave up table d'hôte dinners at the Hotel de Paris (except in the summer) the Café filled that gap in the programme of the controlling company. In the past it seemed to be the policy of the authorities to be able to say that the small man and his wife over from Nice or Menton for the day and treading warily in the pathway of pleasure could get a square and inexpensive meal at the very doors of the Casino. Those days are passed. If you want to feed cheaply you must go elsewhere. The lunch

at the Café to-day has been costing thirty francs and the dinner forty, plus, in each case, a twelve-per-cent. tax – and the usual ten-per-cent. tip, of course. These prices are calculated to frighten away the small man and are, I maintain, an error in policy. Moreover, the fixed-price meals were simply not good enough. Still, on a fine day it is very pleasant to lunch *à la carte* at the Café in the open air. They generally have a cold salmon in cut, the German wines are good if expensive, they have an interesting if unreliable white Hermitage, and they did have *en carafe* a white still Champagne which perhaps these lines may encourage them to replace. I doubt it. The tendency of the Hotel and Café de Paris wine lists is to do away with the cheaper wines. For protestants there is always beer. They will give it you *en carafe*. It is brewed on the other side of the Rock and is better than most French beers that I know. In view of the alteration in the relations between the Hotel de Paris and the Casino, it seems to me that the future of the Café is wrapped in doubt. There is no question that it could be made pleasanter and more efficient. And it is certain that the large garden which they tell me they are to have at the Hermitage, a garden in which one can eat and overlook the sapphire waters of the Port, will take away one of the reasons for lunching at the Café. They have even talked about doing away with the place altogether, and building a new ‘Sporting’ on or near its site. It is unlikely that anything will come of that idea. A café is necessary, and anyhow all sorts of difficulties would arise in connection with the ownership of the land. I believe that the Administration are tenants. The man to whom the land belongs was clever.

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You are wondering where the bathing-place is, that chief and foremost reason for Monte Carlo's existence? From the gardens near the Café, or better still from the Terrace, you can see it, a mile perhaps away on the coast towards Italy – you will make out the white row of cabins against the wall of the railway embankment. In the summer months of the year a Casino omnibus starts every quarter of an hour to take you there – and it will bring you back. Better to walk. To reach on foot the Plage de Larvotto, as it is called, you go down to the station yard and follow the road that winds round the Terminus Hotel. But the bathing-place will keep. I will write of it hereafter, saying here, however, that I found bathing in March not unpleasant, provided that the sea is not over-rough.

Enough for the day in any case. The sun is sinking. It is time to go back to your hotel. One other thing I must tell you: the chief post office is near the Casino, round to the right, overlooking the Port. There is a minor office in the Atrium of the Casino itself, and a letter-box at the head of the Casino steps. Myself, however, I always prefer to post my letters as early in the day as is possible at the chief office. There are two boxes at the railway station exit: one for letters going in the direction of France, the other for those which go to or will pass through Italy. I fight shy of them. The first post of the day for Paris and so on is at ten o'clock; there is one at midday; and others at four and at five-thirty. As I say, it is best to post early. You can be reasonably certain that letters posted before four o'clock on a Monday afternoon, say, will reach London in time for the first delivery on Wednesday. If you post at the station you

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have a few extra minutes – but perhaps they will forget to clear the box!

By the way, you will find in the *Eclaireur de Nice* a daily paper which will give you timely information about what is going on, the programme of different events, the hour of their start and so on. The *Continental Daily Mail*, which arrives on the day following its publication, also devotes all the year round much attention to the Riviera.

Ask the newsagent to show you also the Comte de Bourbel's Menton and Monte Carlo paper and Mrs. Barnett's *The European World*. With these four you are not likely to miss much that has happened in the neighbourhood that might conceivably be considered to be of social importance and you are unlikely to miss knowing what is going to happen in the immediate future.

THE CULINARY ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPALITY

ON your first night in Monte Carlo you will no doubt wish to dine, unless you are a very conscientious *pensionnaire*, in that restaurant in which you will see most and have the best food, in which, in fact, you will discover most quickly what arrivals preceded your own and will most efficiently proclaim your own presence. I hardly know which house to recommend. In the old days *Ciro's* — of course. *Ciro* was a genius at his job, a pocket Napoleon, a man of temperament, an artist. What food! What wines! Yes, and he was a politician in his work. It used to vex him if he read in the papers that one of his regular customers had given a meal of consequence at the *Paris*. He felt affronted and he would set to work to get even with destiny. I often wonder whether in his retirement in a palace somewhere up at the back of the town he does not feel uneasy that dishes are going to table in the restaurant which still bears his name which have not passed under his seeing eye. In particular he was a genius in knowing when he had had enough. His restaurant was never so large but that he could control and overlook its every activity. I do not think it would have suited him to have to rush from Monte Carlo to *Paris*, from *Paris* to London, from London to *Deauville*. . . . It was quite enough for him to have his own restaurant to look after and the smaller grill room and bar a few doors off in the same *Galerie Charles III*. His lieutenant, his brother, looked after the grill room — but two geniuses



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do not emerge in one family in the same generation. This *Ciro Capozzi* has a ready wit. Remonstrated with by one of his regular clients about certain items on his bill, particularly about the fact that no small sum was charged for butter which had never reached the table at all, he caved in at once, but, in a flash, came a second sentence. Turning to the waiter, he said, 'Charge to Grand Duke at next table; *he* never notice.' There are so many good stories about *Ciro*! Once he took me over his kitchen and his cellar. Order. Precision. Neither quality surprised me, but, as I had but a minute before left the crowded scene of the restaurant upstairs, I could not help being surprised when I saw with how small a kitchen staff and in how small a kitchen his marvels were created. . . . Now *Ciro* is out of the game and *Joseph* is dead we shall never see another perfect restaurant of style. Yet far be it from me to say that the house which still bears that magic name has not qualities of its own. As on all mundane institutions, the time-spirit has had its effect, and certainly on the last occasion on which, a guest, I dined within those walls, I found that the director had not learnt that you could not crowd a half-dozen extra tables into a space already sufficiently filled without the sacrifice of most of the qualities for which one goes to a first-class restaurant. A syndicate is, I suppose, more difficult to work for than a single man. I have a more kindly feeling for this particular syndicate since I have learned that *Sir Walter de Frece* is its chairman. He tells me to order a day or two beforehand a steak, kidney and oyster pudding and that I shall have something to write home about. *Ciro's* must miss *Humberto*. A good restaurant — I say it again — must have a personality at its

head. Do you remember Ventura in the grill room of the London Carlton? I mention his name here in order to add that he has recovered his health now and has a hotel and restaurant of his own, the Aurora at Bordighera, just across the Italian frontier. . . . On days that are sufficiently warm one lunches outside Ciro's in the Galerie. One does the same at the Metropole farther along. A wonderful view in both cases.

Perhaps the Hotel de Paris will be the place for your first dinner. Perhaps. Go first, though, and have a heart-to-heart talk with the director of the restaurant. Make him realize that you want a good table and that if you do not get what you order exactly as you want it, and without undue waiting, you will, it is likely, never give his restaurant a second chance. In fact, make him realize that you are a client after his own taste, a man who will really appreciate his own, his assistants' and his chefs' endeavours to do you justice and the house credit. If you do the thing with tact you will touch something in his heart and no one else will be better served than you. As to what you should order, I can make few suggestions. They used years ago to make a *sole Egyptienne*, a sole filleted and cooked in a little paper cube. The caviare was as good as one could hope for. On this rocky coast the wines of Bordeaux are better 'succeeded' than those of Burgundy. The Paris brandies have deteriorated – as have the brandies of all the world. For all I know they may have invented at the Paris the *soufflé surprise*. It was within its walls that I first came across that favourite gastronomic atrocity. If one must eat sweets, then their *mandarines glacées* are to be commended; and so is a wonderful cake, the *gâteau Mexicain*. If it were lunch that

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was in question I should suggest *langouste Thermidor* or *langouste Winterthur*. By the way, the lobster is not to be found in these seas. There are gourmets who actually prefer the langouste. I do not, but I am willing to concede that the clawless fish is a very good second. I think, however, that its flesh is less tender and that it has less flavour. And I have much authority on my side, but not, I fancy, the preponderance of French authority.

They have had great figures as directors of the Hotel de Paris restaurant. In the last year of the War I had an amusing experience with one of them, a regular picture of a man, one who long before had made his considerable pile and had returned to his native town. I was at a Northern French seaport waiting day after day in the hope that passenger traffic to England could be reopened. The landlord seemed familiar to me. There was something dominating in the way in which he marshalled and ordered his little party of waitresses. . . . He scolded in no half-hearted way the woman-carver who would insist on giving too much meat to the guests. Meat was scarce. Where had I seen him before? And then of a sudden I remembered. He had directed the restaurant of the Paris. He had had hundreds of waiters under him. He had been a Field-Marshal among generals . . . and the War had brought him to the management of a bare half-dozen of inexperienced girls! The truth, I found, was that he had come back to help a son or a son-in-law, to take his place, to liberate a man for the front. His was the spirit of France.

The Metropole? Yes, the Metropole is a standing monument to the prescience of the Gordon Hotel directors. They saw very early in the history of Monte Carlo

the possibilities of its exploitation. And its restaurant is not bad, although I confess that my own acquaintance with it is almost confined to its *diners de gala*, which take place on Thursdays. They have good dancers at those galas. In that matter they are not to be beaten; you must propitiate the head waiter if you wish to have a table from which you can see their elegant gymnastics. I have said that one can lunch outside the restaurant in the gallery. It is rather a mystery to me, that gallery. I observed the other day that the Metropole at tea-time took up with its crowded tea tables the whole of the space at its front. This seemed to be no longer a right of way – and perhaps it is only by courtesy that visitors, other than guests of the hotel, use the end of the Galerie as a passage. By the way, those Metropole teas are an institution. The dancers of the hotel relieve the monotony and, if they can be kept at the high level of Fontana and Marjorie Moss, Sir Francis Towle is fortunate indeed. But can they? Such a singer as Yvonne Georges is, surely, a better ‘draw’ than any ordinary dancing couple?

The Hermitage? Very likely. But it has hardly settled down under its new direction at the time that I write this. I remember thirty years ago that its restaurant was very good indeed; the room itself was dignified and of an agreeable shape. If only its management will have the courage to put cookery first! Yes, I will guess that, by the spring of 1928, you will do no harm in choosing the Hermitage for your first dinner.

The Riviera Palace? Well, if you are stopping at the Riviera Palace I should certainly counsel you to dine there on your first day. Put in a claim for a good table and see that it is kept for you for all your stay – a good table on the

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terrace at luncheon and a good table in the Italianate restaurant itself at dinner. Naturally they do not hasten to give their best tables to unknown *pensionnaires*, but I am assuming that you are not a *pensionnaire*. Better independence. You will have the consideration to tell a maître d'hôtel sometimes when you will not be wanting your table. Monsieur Albertazzi of this hotel is an hôtelier and restaurateur of unsurpassed experience. Perhaps you know his other hotel, the Grand Hotel de la Terrasse at Dinard. He has seen to it that the kitchen is one to be proud of, and it is certain that the great Venetian restaurant is one of the finest rooms of its kind in the world. They dance at the Riviera Palace at tea in its beautiful hall and after dinner, and, although a motor omnibus draws up at its door every few minutes to take you down to the International Sporting Club, yet the atmosphere is more restful than that of the other first-class hotels.

A word about that same 'Sporting.' Comparatively speaking it is a new institution. Thirty years ago the Rooms closed at eleven o'clock, unless the theatre or opera was not over, and when they were closed the players in general went home to bed. There was a very little supper dancing at the Café de Paris and it was not until later that one Montaldi turned the Carlton, in the Avenue des Fleurs behind the Metropole, into a supper and dancing place which it was considered distinctly improper for a lady to visit. *Ces dames* gathered there in strength. There was dancing too, rather forced and uproarious in character, at La Festa, a barn-like building on the site of the present tennis courts. It was in the days of rag-time. Monte Carlo night-life was, however, slow of development. But, as the Administration

grew more greedy and calculating and started play at ten in the morning instead of eleven and carried it on until midnight in the 'kitchen' and till two o'clock in the morning in the *Salons Privés*, nocturnal gaiety grew more vigorous and was kept up till a later and later hour. The Sporting Club helped the tendency: it was started in the old Blanc villa opposite the post office and was equipped with a good and reasonable restaurant of its own and a very good bar; you may find it useful to be on good terms with 'Joseph', the barman! He is a character. The 'Sporting' has some of the qualities of a good club. One meets everybody. Opening at four in the afternoon, its gaming-rooms remain open until it is time to dine, and reopen at ten. One plays trente-et-quarante, roulette, and chemin-de-fer, and sometimes baccarat. I do not know what truth there is in the story, but they say that the Greeks would be operating as much in Monte Carlo as in Cannes if only the Administration would be more accommodating in the matter of the cagnotte. The Cannes Casino is willing, I am told, to work on a smaller percentage. If that is true, then I am not surprised that Cornuché's town is preferred. Even one per cent. on the sort of turnover the Greeks had was a fortune . . .! Only on one occasion, now I come to think of it, have I seen baccarat played at the 'Sporting'. It gave me a shock to see the wads, the stacks, of *mille* notes round the banker. Almost an indecent spectacle!

At the 'Sporting' there is generally a very big game at the big chemin-de-fer table. I have seen hundreds of thousands of francs in one hand depend on the turn of a card.

You can become a member of the 'Sporting' with no

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great difficulty except in the very crowded season. It is well to know some one who is already a member to vouch for your respectability, but if you belong to any recognized social club in your own country they are not likely to say you nay. You pay a subscription, but it is not large, especially if you are already a subscriber to the *Salons Privés*; you get a further rebate if you belong to one of the what it calls 'corresponding clubs' – any well-known



THE DEVIL'S OWN LUCK

and good club, that is. Woman's dress is at its best after dinner at the 'Sporting'. If any beautiful *demimondaines* exist, they are to be seen within its walls. I do not know how their respectability is estimated. Perhaps beauty is taken as an alternative test. Celebrities jostle one another. Even authors. You will see Sacha Guitry and his wife side by side punting in louis. There is the last Argentine millionaire. That large lady who plays chemin-

de-fer with ten-thousand-franc counters is a lumber-king's daughter. Mr. Phillips Oppenheim. Mr. Winchell Smith. Sir Walter and Lady de Frece. The King of Sweden.

The bar of the 'Sporting' is a pleasant place in which to take tea in the afternoon. Then is the hour of the villa resident whom late hours do not suit. At the later sitting people arrive from Cannes, from Nice, from Cap-Ferrat, from the dinner parties in the hotels and in the villas. For the system-player, however, the social atmosphere is rather disconcerting. Everybody knows everybody else, or at least who everybody else is, and in consequence one is always liable to be put off one's stroke. The directors of the Casino learn wisdom from their previous experience with the rooms upstairs to which women were not admitted. The gambling there was furious, but it was calculated, and I believe that the Administration found it an expensive experiment which they are unlikely to repeat. In the 'Sporting' they will continue playing as long as there are a sufficient number of players, but, generally speaking, things grow dull long before sunrise and, if they have any money left, its members, if they are not too old, are likely to go on to dance at the Carlton, and then, a little later, to the sombre Arbrec, at 33 Boulevard de la Princesse Charlotte, a Russian place. Be wary of the attentions of its choir. They will toast you in champagne, singing a song in your honour, in which your name is brought in and during which you will be expected to drink off at a draught the whole of your goblet of champagne. Then, if you wish to be in the tradition, you will break the glass by bringing it down sharply on the table! You pay a large bill and go out into the open air with uncertain head. The sun



THE RUSSIAN TOAST

has risen. . . . By the way, I should tell you that the better champagnes here cost two hundred francs a bottle!

But this is a digression from the consideration of the culinary resources of Monte Carlo. Let us resume. There is the Restaurant Ré, in which the local cuisine is, or used to be, encouraged. *Fritures monégasques* were at their best there. No band disturbed the processes of assimilation and digestion and the prices were not high. Madame Ré, that charming lady, has retired, but still it is a place to try. And so is the Italian Quinto's, in which also is no troublesome music. Years and years ago Quinto occupied smaller premises to the eastward and his prices were lower. The place was a refuge of the gambler who, if not broken, was at least bent. Now the prices have mounted very considerably and the installation is more ambitious. Certainly Quinto has tried, and not without success, to keep up the old traditions and to resist the time-spirit. Champagne drinkers tell me that it had until recently the only good champagne, according to English taste, in the Principality. Odd, that question of Monte Carlo champagne. It used to be good. Nowadays, I take it, the merchants think that anything will do and Monte Carlo shares with Montmartre the distinction of providing a headache with every bottle. It doesn't matter to me. I hold that champagne is a decoction, a distraction for ladies (which is odd, since it is a depressant rather than an aphrodisiac), a 'ginger beer'. I did hear that Sir Francis Towle, finding it impossible to get really good 'English-taste' champagne from the Metropole, ordered the wine for his English hotels, had it sent to London, paid the duty, and then had it shipped to Monte Carlo. All things are possible. But I do not believe this one.

CULINARY ASPECTS

There are many cheaper restaurants and some of them are good. One secret I will keep to myself, that of a very cheap house indeed, for it is small and could not find room for many of the readers of this book. Moreover, it is not smart. But a house that is rather smart and which it is very pleasant to lunch at is the restaurant *au Quai de Plaisance*, on the edge of the harbour at the foot of the post-office hill, the Avenue de Monte Carlo. No fixed-price meals here! For preference you should have your table in the open air with the life of the Port unrolling itself under your eyes. They cook *langouste à l'Armoricaine* very well here, and other fish too, I imagine. It is a house without other pretensions than to make its guests comfortable, and it succeeds.

Of one cheap restaurant I have already written, the Bœuf à la Mode in the Avenue de la Costa; actually the cheapest in which I have experimented is over the frontier in Beausoleil, the Crèmerie Russe, up that lane, the rue de Tivoli, which, leaving the Société Generale on the right, mounts toward the Riviera Palace. It is run by two Russians, is much frequented by their compatriots, and the meals cost ten francs a head! Sometimes it is very good. A glass of vodka costs threepence – six cents. I do not suppose it is very good vodka, but it does its work. And that reminds me that I copied out of 'A.D.C.'s' *Daily Mail* notes the other day the recipe for a vodka cocktail: five parts of the Russian spirit – it should, Russians tell me, be Smirnoff vodka (although 'A.D.C.' does not say so) – and one of French vermouth. Add a dash of grenadine – I wish that the recipe had been more explicit: what is 'a dash'? – and serve well iced. If your party is so ill assorted that a cocktail is a necessity, then this, I am both told and

find by experience, is very efficacious. Russians will appreciate it – without prejudice to the fact that they prefer their vodka neat!

To revert for a moment to the Carlton. If you are going there with a party you had better order your table well beforehand. It is generally very crowded. Mazen, its proprietor, has made such a success of it as Montaldi, his predecessor, never dreamed of. He, poor man, became so depressed at his prospects at the beginning of the War that he cut his throat. If he had only managed to stick it out for two or three more years! At that time perhaps it was natural to take a gloomy view of the prospects of Monte Carlo. The Administration had its financial difficulties – not unnaturally, when one comes to consider their huge outgoings and how little in those days must have been coming in. At the outbreak of war the Casino was closed, but most of its expenses continued. It was not, however, closed for long. Mr. Kingston has it that it did not reopen until January 1, 1915, but I have it over Monsieur Fleury's signature that the 'Sporting' reopened on the first of November, 1914, and indeed when I was in Nice in that unhappy autumn I know the Casino was carrying on to the best of its ability. Belfort Bax, who even in those days was rather unready about the feet, could not face an English winter. He had discussed the possibility of getting back to his flat in Nice with his friend, H. M. Hyndman, and that one, always rather inclined to take an excited view of possibilities, had told him that there was nothing to stop it, if only Mrs. Bax could be prevented on the journey from talking French. Dear lady! She had spent many, many seasons in the South but she had never got rid of the accent of her

German childhood. According to Hyndman the devoted, inseparable couple would run a good chance of being lynched if anyone should hear Mrs. Bax's speech. 'You know what a French crowd is!' The situation was rendered the more difficult by the fact that Bax was not in the habit of doing anything for himself that his wife could do for him. He had the inspiration of asking me to escort them, and he explained the difficulties that threatened. I did not take those difficulties seriously, but I went – returning on the day of our arrival. Poor Bax! I did not have the heart to ask him how Mrs. Bax was to hide her accent in Nice itself. . . . In the sequel no unhappy thing happened to them. Partly perhaps this immunity was explained by the fact that the Niçois is very used to Germans and the German accent and was never so near, or so excited by, the War as were the dwellers in the northern towns.

Pessimism was rife in those days with regard to the Riviera in general. It had been so much a German holiday ground. The Germans had so many villas along its coasts. Surely they would never again be able to return. Values would come tumbling down. I took a gloomy view myself. Towards the end of the War, or perhaps just after, I met one day, travelling back on the Channel boat, Besserer, the director of the restaurant of the Carlton Hotel in London. He told me he had just accepted the same post at the Hotel de Paris. 'You've made a mistake,' I said with that cocksureness which belongs so often to the extremely ignorant; 'Monte Carlo is finished, finished; there will be much less money in the world, and the yearly crop of rich fools will be less and less vigorous.' Naturally he paid no attention to me, and went to the Principality.

Even at that period the Paris had not the calm amenity of the London Carlton, and I imagine that Besserer must often have sighed for the quietude of Pall Mall. I was pessimistic in just the same way when Mazen, then the maître d'hôtel of the Réserve at Beaulieu, told me he had bought the Carlton in Monte Carlo. 'You'll lose everything you've saved,' I assured him, and gave reasons for my belief. The chief of them was that the period of extravagance and folly and wealth had ended with the War. There were to be years of hard work, of reconstruction. . . . Monte Carlo and such places would not have a chance.

And in the sequel Monte Carlo never had such years as those which succeeded 1918. Never had so many people flocked to the Casino; never had there been so great a demand for villas and apartments; never had the building trades been so feverishly active; never had so many of the amenities been sacrificed so rapidly to the greed of gain. It is true that something happened with the finances of the Société itself, but that, no doubt, was partly caused by the difficulties resulting from the lean years of the War and partly by the great after-war scale of expenses to which the reigning and meticulous Monsieur Camille Blanc gave his assent, or which, perhaps, it would be more correct to say he initiated. The costs mounted and mounted; it became really necessary to have a stock-taking and a reconsideration of the position. Followed a complete change of policy. For various reasons Monsieur Blanc was superseded. Economy reigned – generally it was applied in the wrong quarters: the public services deteriorated; the Principality was no longer quite as clean as a new pin; vexatious charges were made for privileges

that before had been gratuitous; every little bit of land seemed to be dedicated to some fresh scheme of money-making. More and more the amenities were sacrificed; for instance, previously immaculate pavements were allowed to fall into disrepair. And side by side with this wave of economy there rose an orgy of capital expenditure. Plans for new roads were embarked upon; there was to be a new Casino, a new bathing-place, a new drainage system, a new and magnificent set of tennis courts. Some of these projects proceed – very, very slowly. Until they are finished they will be a constant vexation to the eye. Some of them, of course, are long overdue. A new drainage system which will make a really happy bathing-place possible is badly needed. I fancy, however, that it is the new tennis ground that will, indirectly at least, pay the most. It will be a magnificent advertisement. But all these ‘improvements’ are a strain on the Casino finance. There are now so many causes for bad season following bad season. Most of these causes could easily be removed. They are not deep-rooted. Perhaps Miss Elsa Maxwell, who is very clever, will have worked those miracles of improvement for which I hear she was engaged. I could tell her a thing or two myself!

I believe I am right in saying that under the Blanc administration no reserve was ever set aside out of profits to provide for just such difficulties as arose so suddenly and dramatically in 1914 and which have continued for so many years. Indeed, Mr. S. R. Beresford – the ‘Bob’ Beresford of so many Monte Carlo anecdotes – in his book, *The Future of Monte Carlo*, put the cash resources of the Société at as low a figure as thirty-five million francs. I doubt the correctness of his estimate. It is so very low.

PITY AND TERROR

i

A LITTLE English girl, almost a child in years and with a certain half-assured, half-wistful beauty, was, some years ago, attached to one of the Monte Carlo hotels as a dancing teacher and as the partner of the chief professional. On gala occasions they would go through a 'number' of their own. She danced well, the child, and she enjoyed both her work and the golden days of February sunshine. In a small way she was the pet of every one in the hotel and it was clear that one of the younger professional dancers, a not particularly attractive little man, not at all in the Argentine tradition, had fallen in love with her. He, Monégasque, had no English, and she had little French. They would play together like butterflies for hours of the morning. She would tease him and then, for a minute, she would spoil him with her eyes. On her side, a flirtation *à l'Anglaise*, harmless in intention, pleasant to watch, amusing even. On his, no game but serious passion, growing to desperation as the days passed and no real progress was made with his suit. 'A dangerous game that to play with a Southerner; they don't understand, these Monégasque boys. With them love is not a thing to play with,' I was told; 'there'll be trouble if she doesn't pull up.' Each day the youth fell deeper into the net of her grace and beauty. When circumstance allowed him to dance with her he did so with tigerish intensity; it was almost painful to watch.

One night there was a gala dinner at the hotel. I was

bidden to it and, arriving rather early, was told that it would be twenty minutes or more before my host and hostess would be down. I went into the Bar and found there both Miquette, as she had chosen to call herself, and the lady who was, in a sense, her chaperon. We fell to talking and I asked Miquette what she was going to do for us that night. She made a wry face: 'Nothing if I had my way – I have a bad foot, a corn; it hurts. It can't be helped though. . . . We're going to do the *danse des apaches*. We haven't rehearsed it properly.'

Left alone, Miquette and I chattered for a while. I teased her about her Monégasque admirer, and she told me of the 'boy', an English officer, who was in India and whom she would go out to marry when she had saved a little money. . . .

After dinner she and her principal danced better than ever before. The bad foot was forgotten evidently, and perhaps one can rehearse too often. . . . Delighted applause from the diners. Miquette was the star of the evening; she won all hearts; even the women allowed her qualities. She and her partner danced again and again. . . . Then, we were told, she was tired – and we were not surprised.

The table at which Miquette sat was near our own. As the evening advanced professional dancers arrived from other hotels and took a share in the revels. I heard them say that Miquette and her friends must come, directly, to the Carlton. You must understand that these dancers, when they have danced for the public, have the happy habit of dancing elsewhere for themselves. No, she didn't want to. I could hear her protests. She was tired. Her foot ached. She had had her success and it was clear

that she preferred to go to bed with applause ringing in her ears. But she was overruled and when our own party broke up she and her friends were cheerfully packing themselves into a carriage.

That night we saw her again. Once more she had forgotten her foot. She danced for her own pleasure, dressed no longer *à l'apache*. She looked sweet and very *comme il faut*. The tango, the waltz. A happy child. But one must go home even from the Carlton, and we left her at it. . . .

The next morning I was pacing the Terrace with my host of the night before when a man whom we both knew came up to us. 'That was a bad business at our hotel last night,' he said to my friend.

'What are you talking about?' my friend replied.

'Why, that girl being murdered.'

'Girl! Murdered! At our hotel! You're talking nonsense, pulling our leg.'

'I'm not. I wish I were. That dancer last night. She was killed this morning, driving home from the Carlton. A chauffeur told me.'

My friend was shocked, and showed it. No doubt I did too.

'Murdered! Impossible! Miquette! Some fool thinks he's clever. We were at the Carlton ourselves after they'd cleared us out at the "Sporting"; she was there at the next table with three or four friends, as happy as a grig and dancing the shoes off her feet. They left just before we did. I heard Madame What's-her-name who's always with her saying it was time they went home. No doubt they drove; we walked. Why, they can hardly have had

time to get into the hotel before we arrived, for we started soon after.'

'Well, that's all I know. She was murdered last night – this morning I should say, and they're looking now for the man who shot her, whoever he may be. Better not talk about it; they'll hush it up, no doubt; but you wait: you'll never see her again.'

My friend and I turned into the Café and had a double whisky apiece. We told each other we didn't believe the story, and yet . . . He asked me to say nothing about it to my wife or to his. 'It no doubt isn't true, but just the idea would upset them terribly. That child! She was all youth and health and happiness last night. Of course there's some mistake.'

We parted, and as I had no reason to go near my friend's hotel that day, I confess I did my best to forget the whole thing. It doesn't do in Monte Carlo to show yourself too curious. . . . I might ask questions all day up and down the Principality and learn nothing. It was not as if I was stopping in the hotel myself.

That night, as it happened, we were again at the Carlton, guests at a large supper party. My elder daughter sat opposite me and next to her was an agreeable rattle of a man. I was busy with my own affairs, but, suddenly, in a lull of the conversation, I heard his voice:

' . . . I do hope they'll catch the man.'

'What man?' my daughter broke in.

'The man François, the dancer, who shot that girl Miquette last night.'

I tried hard to stop the conversation. I tried in vain to kick him under the table. It was useless. Words like that gain every one's attention, and, anyhow, my daugh-

ter, naturally enough, had seized on what had been said: 'Oh, oh!' she called out to my wife. 'Do you know that beautiful girl we saw last night has been shot? Isn't it dreadful? . . .'

The agreeable rattle had a minute of real success. No one at the table had heard the story, although, no doubt, it was known to every waiter and chasseur and cabman in the place and, among themselves, had been discussed in its every aspect.

Yes, it was all true. The little butterfly was dead, crushed. In the very hall in which we were she had on the previous night danced and talked of her success and spun her dreams; and now she was dead. It appeared that the Monégasque had followed her to the Carlton and had asked her to dance with him. He was excited, for she had refused him any such favour earlier in the evening. Again she refused. She laughed, indeed; she was with the great people of her world. She hadn't time for an admirer of his weight. . . . He left the place and, knowing that she would soon be going home, waited for her at a corner of the road near her hotel and, as the carriage slackened for the turn, leaped on to the step. 'I want to speak to you alone, Miquette, for a moment.'

'I don't want to speak to you. I'm tired of your running after me. If you've got anything to say, say it now before the others' — for her principal was in the carriage, and the lady, her friend and companion.

François made no answer. Before they could know what was happening he had drawn a revolver, had fired it, and had stepped off into the darkness. The horses, frightened, started off at a gallop; the driver, frightened too, did nothing to check their speed; the lady, on whose

knee Miquette was sitting, felt the child slip down to her feet, but she had no time to pay attention to her, for the man, Miquette's employer, had cried out, and, turning, she could see in the obscure light of the lamp that his face was covered with blood.

In a second they were at the hotel. The night-porter came out. Hastily they cried that the man had been shot – 'Leave Mademoiselle for the moment; she has fainted. Help me first with Monsieur.'

But Monsieur was not so seriously hurt. 'Thank God!' The bullet had gone through the soft flesh at the top of his nose. Water and a dressing and all would be well – but it was the kind of wound that meant a great loss of blood. They sat him down and then went out to bring in Miquette. She had not recovered consciousness. She was limp and heavy in their hands. It was not until they were under the strong lamp of the hall that it was seen that her shoulder too was covered with blood. . . .

The bullet had entered her breast first, had found its way to her heart and then, travelling on, had done that other little damage.

My friends must have missed blundering in on the scene by hardly a minute. In Monte Carlo they are not unused to tragic happenings, and they have the knack of dealing with them quickly. That night-porter, though, must have been unusually swift!

Poor little Miquette. Monte Carlo talked of her for a while. There was a subscription in the hotel for the expenses of her funeral. . . . And then in so few days she was forgotten.

In this last September my wife and I, early in the evening, were coming back from the Condamine and, as our destination was the station, we walked not by the Casino but by the Quai de Plaisance and the new road at the side of the port. We came to the tunnel under the pigeon-shooting ground. It was almost dark and, in the tunnel itself, quite dark save for the infrequent lamps. Its black cavernous mouth might well give us pause. Few people walked this way even in sunshine. . . . We chose, rather than the tunnel, the direct roadway, the longer footpath that runs, almost a tunnel itself, over the rocks and under the arches that support the ground above, arches which give on to the sea, which that night was uneasy. There were no stars. . . . As we entered my wife drew closer to me. We were alone, and we hastened, so that we might lose no time in getting back to the light of the town. . . . Suddenly, turning a corner, I saw, and hoped that I was alone in seeing, two figures in black tightly embraced, a man and a woman. Some little light fell on the woman's face and figure, on her face especially. She seemed to be supporting her companion; his face was hidden in her breast; she seemed to be supporting him with all her strength. Her face had in it the despair of all the world and of all the years; white it was, and it had courage and agony and terror. . . .

'Oh, oh!' my wife breathed just as we had passed them; 'did you see?' . . .

For a moment we thought of going back and asking if they were in trouble, whether we could help. But one thinks quickly, and one thinks foolishly, at such moments .

It was possible that imagination had played us both a trick, that these were lovers and that the face of the woman had been made a symbol of woe by some accident of light. And if there was emotion, I said, it was more than likely that it was the emotion of some love-affair; perhaps they were parting as lovers have sometimes to do, each to go back to his own home, his own duty, never to meet again. . . . What could we have done?

We walked on, a little shaken, and as we emerged into the open of the road we met a fisherman returning home, a rod on his shoulder, a lamp in his hand casting strange shadows. Whether he went by the pathway or by the road we knew not, but his presence was reassuring, and so, unreasonably, was that of a Monégasque policeman who was seated on the first bench.

Yes, we walked on, but we were troubled, and when, three minutes later, we passed under the railway arch by the tiny fishing harbour, and while we were still discussing the agony of the woman's face and wondering whether we ought to have done something – something, we heard a noise; it was as of a shot. It was repeated. 'I'm sure they've shot themselves,' my wife cried. 'No, no!' I answered. 'No . . . Yes, it might have been a shot – but it is more likely to have been the bursting of a tyre or something like that.' I managed to reassure her, and, when we had done our business at the station, we went home. But that night, and often thereafter, we talked of the couple and of the despair in the woman's eyes. . . .

A couple of weeks later my younger daughter coming home from a tea-party burst into her mother's room: 'Did you hear about those people killing themselves a

fortnight ago down by the arches under the pigeon-shooting ground?’

I made then some few inquiries, but I could learn very little, and much of what I did learn had evidently been prepared for the occasion. It was, I am glad to say, impossible to be certain that the man and woman we saw were the couple who were dead. . . . We both found ourselves putting into words the same thought: that the sound of our steps had interrupted them in the very act; the man whose head was buried in his companion’s breast was, we felt, dead already, kept erect only by her will and all the strength of her arms. . . .

One Monégasque friend of mine to whom news of these occurrences generally comes and of whom I inquired assured me that he had not heard of this one, but that he and his countrymen troubled themselves little about such things. ‘They happen too often, Monsieur.’

I have written down these true stories, have called this chapter ‘Pity and Terror’, and have placed it where it is, because it is as well that one should realize that with all the sunshine, with all the gaiety, there lurks on this part of the coast, as in London and in New York, the grey, grim shadow of horror, even of tragedy. The pale spectre walks these gardens and these terraces.

PERMANENT VISITORS AND
THEIR ATTITUDE TO MONACO'S
CHIEF INDUSTRY

YOU can live in Monte Carlo for weeks together and hear hardly a mention of gambling. There is a preponderantly English set which lives up behind the Grand Hotel, in the new quarter towards the Tête de Chien, the quarter of villas, who will surprise you by their avoidance of the one subject in which, on arrival at least, you are likely to be interested. Hardly ever do these people go into the ordinary Casino and the only way in which they seem rather to fall from grace is in the season, when, at tea-time and after dinner, they use the 'Sporting' as a rendezvous. Even there, however, they approach no nearer to the actual tables than is necessary; they occupy chairs in strategic positions and consider the dresses of their friends or sit at the little tables in the bar and talk and talk. If it were not that residence in the Principality affords a certain immunity from the inconveniences of the income tax, it would be difficult to account for the presence of this society; one would think that its members would have chosen Hyères or Valescure or Pau or Beaulieu – although, even as I write, I read that Beaulieu is to be awakened from its sweet-doing-nothing and given in 1929 a super-Casino all of its own which will enable it to vie with Cannes. That casino, however, will not be able to offer trente-et-quarante and roulette to its visitors, and, somehow or other, the absence of those two games does enable a town to avoid the accusation of being a

gambling hell. When one speaks of Cannes even, one thinks of yachting and golf, tennis and the beauty of the Croisette, rather than of the fact that the town would be much as it was in the 'eighties of the last century if it were not for that mill in the Casino and the operation of the *cagnotte*. A large casino at Beaulieu will, however, especially if its promoters can secure the occasional attendance of the Greek syndicate, mean more visitors, 'improvements', beautiful shops and much, much, much more money for the town – and prices will go up, the prices of land and of villas particularly. Incidentally, the Monte Carlo Administration will not be pleased. Less money to tempt into the pockets of the shareholders of the Société!

'Sooner or later every one in the Western World who has more than three thousand pounds a year must come to the Riviera,' William Clissold says, and it is true that most of the permanent residents have very much a three-thousand-pounds-a-year aspect. I fancy that it is more the income tax than 'a middle-aged hunger for the sun' that brought them down here. In a few cruel pages Mr. Wells delivers himself of his analysis. It is enough if I refer my readers to the 'Stratum of Futility' chapter midway through the Clissold book. I do not think the author of *The Outline of History* can be very popular on this coast. But, oh, how often he is right!

It is perhaps not so much that these English residents and regular visitors condemn and despise the hell at their doors. That would be a difficult attitude for them to sustain, living in comfort as they do as the result of the sharing out of the 'spoils', and enjoying such advantages as the intensive Opera, theatrical and Russian ballet seasons afford. It is rather that experience has told them

MONACO'S CHIEF INDUSTRY

that if one takes up residence in the place for any length of time one has either to ignore its chief activity or be destroyed by it. Once become involved in the mill and you will come sooner or later to embarrassment. It is to be remembered, too, that some of them have had their lesson: once bitten, twice shy. Another thing: talk about the Tables is, in the long run, so very, very dull. Each fresh visitor goes through each stage of the gambling disease in exactly the same way as did his predecessors. He hears of, or 'invents', exactly the same 'infallible' systems. He gives exactly the same answers to the warnings of experience. Besides, if you are not interested in the exact order in which, as in trente-et-quarante, several packs of cards shuffled together are found ultimately to have settled down, or in the gyrations of a little ball running round a bowl with thirty-seven numbered partitions in one of which it must in the long run come to rest, as in roulette, then you are not likely to find endless and quite serious discussions as to the way in which the fortuitous results are brought about either pleasant or profitable. And the worst of it is, the older the system-player is, the stupider he is, and the more he will spin out of an imperfect observation the most surprising and ridiculous theories. Gather together half a dozen people interested in roulette and make some trivial remarks about the possibilities of the game. Hey presto! they all become as mad as March hares. One is certain of this; another is certain of that. 'Have you a pencil? I'll explain it to you.' 'Here, I want a bit of paper; the back of an envelope 'll do.' One, more methodical than the rest, produces a *permanence* from his pocket, sole souvenir of the morning's disasters. He reads it out that the others may test their systems by it. They are

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

all careless of the fact that a system to prove itself must be tested over a *permanence* (a record) not of, say, fifty



AS MAD AS MARCH HARES

spins, but six or seven times fifty thousand spins – and even when it has passed satisfactorily through that ordeal, when one does sit down actually to play it at the green

table, one may, so incalculable are the ways of fate, run at once up against that combination of numbers that spells disaster. It is a common experience. . . .

How many absurd ideas about roulette lodge themselves in people's heads. I was at lunch at the Paris one day with a considerable financier and his wife. No, she never played; it didn't interest her. To make a little money would not be amusing, to lose a little would be annoying. All the same, she knew of a perfect system. I asked to be told all about it. Such curiosity is only polite. Her husband chuckled.

'You play on 9 and all the combinations into which 9 enters —' she told me.

'And is that all?'

'Yes — and it's infallible.'

I laughed. 'But, my dear lady, that's not even a system: it's nothing but the backing of a certain number of chances in the hope that all or at least some of them will materialize. No, you must invent something better than that before you can call your method of play "a system"!'

She looked annoyed. 'I tell you it's perfectly good; I've seen it played time and again. Haven't I, Gustave?'

'Yes, my dear, and you'd better go and try it now. We've finished lunch; I want to be left in peace to read *The Times*; take our friend into the Casino and show him. Seeing's believing! Here, here's fifty thousand francs for you. Mind you, there's no more for that purpose, so don't get bitten! Now go off and convince the sceptic.' He winked at me behind his wife's back; and to her: 'Give me half an hour's peace, like a good woman.'

Fifty thousand francs was nothing to my friend, so I made no protest. We walked, Mrs. So-and-So and I, across to the Casino steps, went through the necessary formality of getting her a card of admission, and, going to the first roulette table, she handed me the notes with instructions that maximums were to be put on all the combinations of 9. I did so: twelve thousand francs each on red, *impair* and *manque*, six thousand francs each on the first dozen and the third column, twenty louis on nine itself, forty louis on each of the *chevaux* and so on. We attracted some attention. My companion was very well known. The croupiers were no doubt glad to see that she whom they had seen so seldom at the tables should again fall into temptation. Perhaps she might now be brought to pay regular toll to the Société.

The ball spun . . .

The ball spun in exactly the same way that it has always spun, but on this occasion the risking by one of my friends in one coup of as large a sum as fifty thousand francs did cause me a little excitement. Not that, reckoned in English or American value, fifty thousand francs is anything surprising as a stake in these days – neither as much as five hundred pounds nor as much as four thousand dollars. I had seen at the ‘Sporting’ round the corner a couple of hundred thousand francs depend on the turn of a card at baccarat or chemin-de-fer. But here in the ordinary Rooms at roulette it is not so usual a stake. And, after all, there were out of thirty-seven, only five chances the turning up of one of which could mean the loss of all my friend risked. She, confident, did not even watch the spin of the ball: she talked vaguely of Monsieur René Leon’s difficulties in keeping pace with Cannes. . . .

Click! The ball had fallen and in the same moment we heard the croupier's cry: '*Neuf, rouge, impair et manque.*'

My friend turned to me triumphantly: 'What did I tell you?' and would indeed have gone away, forgetting to withdraw her stakes and the not small fortune she had won, if I had not held her back.

Heaven alone knows why she should have selected nine to play on! Chance, of course, pure chance. Such things happen more than once in a lifetime. They happen, as far as the spotting of the right number is concerned, on an average once in thirty-seven times. Not more – and not less. Do not, I beg of you, run away with the idea that any special virtue belongs to the number 9. It is just as good or just as bad as 17, 23, 11 or 8, or as any of the thirty-two remaining numbers. Go on playing long enough and one of them will break you, however rich you may be. That is the sole thing of which you can be perfectly sure. And that one is zero, 0, 'fatal zero' as Percy Fitzgerald called it in his novel of *Homburg*. The operation of zero is of such a kind, and of such regularity (on average), that it results in the Bank taking about three per cent. of the aggregate of all the stakes that are put on numbers during the season. In other words, if you put a hundred francs on the number of your choice its value shrinks at that very moment to ninety-seven francs. Take it off while there's time! All this wants a little thinking out but it is true. It is worth thinking out before you make your first essay. Sir Hiram Maxim made it the subject of considerable study. He understood mathematics and instruments of precision. . . .

A young girl once stopped Sir Hiram on the steps of the Casino:

'Sir Hiram, I've got a thousand francs here; I want particularly to double it [*naïve enfant!*]; do tell me what's the best way to play?'

'You couldn't have asked anybody better,' Sir Hiram replied. 'Take it to the first table you come to and put it on any one—it doesn't matter which one—of the even chances. If you have chosen well your thousand francs will be doubled; if not, it'll be gone. That's the best way; that gives you the greatest chance.'

The young girl thought he was teasing. For one thing she wanted to spin out her pleasure or her anxiety. A single coup! Why, it was absurd.

At lunch they met again. 'Listen, Sir Hiram! It's a good thing I didn't take your advice. I've won seven hundred already.'

'So much the better, young lady. I hope your luck may continue.'

At tea both the seven hundred and the capital of a thousand had vanished away, and some borrowed money with them. . . .

You see, Sir Hiram, whom I knew, argued from two facts: (1) That the parts of the board on which one can stake with the least risk of being interfered with by the emergence of zero are the even chances; and (2) that the longer one's money is exposed on the board, the greater number of coups one plays, that is to say, the greater are the chances of zero emerging. Two self-evident propositions which, carried through to their logical conclusion, make it indubitable that if you want to double

your capital you should stake it all in one coup on an even chance. . . . But of course, in that case, if you really like playing for the sake of playing, you do not get so much fun for your money.

I stray, however, from my immediate subject which is the attitude which the permanent elements in Monte Carlo society adopt towards the Casino and towards gambling in general. I will not go so far as to say that 'No, no, we never mention it' is the note, but it does not go far short of it. Certainly it is considered bad form to sit about in public places studying *permanences*, the cards on which one believes oneself to have kept a reliable record of the way in which the numbers or colours have turned up at the last sitting. In short, if you are lunching by yourself anywhere else than in your own room, you may read a paper, you may read a book, you may be bored as much as you please – but you must not fight your battles over again. And another thing: learn at once, that you must neither wish your gambling friends 'good luck!' – for that is supposed to be very unlucky indeed; nor must you, if you are anxious to be a mirror of good form, ask them how much they have lost or won. A vague 'How are you doing?' or 'How are they treating you?' is as much as you must allow yourself in the way of expressing curiosity. And this of course applies as much to Cannes and Biarritz as to Monte Carlo. It is one of the first rules of behaviour in all places where they gamble. Besides, it is not any use to ask. If there is one thing about which people never tell the truth it is gambling. 'About even on the day' is generally as far as they will go. The exception to this rule is the novice who happens to win at his first séance. Especially if he plays on a 'system', he gets up

from the table so convinced of its practical infallibility and of his own cleverness in having selected it and having played it with so cool a head that he will tell the whole story without suppression or embellishment to anybody or everybody, including the manager of his hotel. It is a frankness which lasts until the first day of loss.

APPROACHES TO GAMBLING AT
MONTE CARLO

I HAVE just written something of the attitude of the more or less permanent visitor-population towards the gambling on which Monte Carlo lives and on which, until to-day, she has exceedingly thrived. It is, however, impossible to get away from the fact that the whole coast, at least from St. Raphael onward, is almost entirely built up on the profit made at the various Casinos and that however much one may wish to avoid the subject of gambling it is impossible to do so. It is implicit in every consideration of importance on which one embarks; it may, however unwelcome, crop up suddenly in any conversation. Watch the fashionable and musical worlds pour into the Atrium at the close of each fresh act of the Opera in the Monte Carlo theatre, during the performance of, say, 'Lohengrin'. Do they discuss Wagner and musical subjects in general? Yes, small groups of them do. There is at Monte Carlo and in its neighbourhood always some slight leavening of the musically intelligent; but the greater number of opera-goers at the beginning of the entr'acte turn at once to the portals which lead to the actual gaming-rooms and perambulate them observingly. Others, as Monsieur Henri Chateau has noticed, anxious to get back in the few minutes of the interval the several louis which they have paid for their seats in the theatre, begin immediately to play – sometimes with success! By the way, the real artist must find this Monte Carlo audience not a very satisfactory one to sing to. He must feel that so many of



A LUCKY ONE AT THE SPORTING CLUB

those very smart spectators have their minds in the Rooms rather than on the music. True, once an act has begun, no laggard can arrive and no spectator can leave his seat. That must be a blessing to the artist. How happy it would be if the same rule were as rigidly applied in London and elsewhere! In Monte Carlo, coerced perhaps by this rule, many of the audience abandon their seats altogether after the first act and spend the rest of the evening, pursuing capricious fortune in the *Salons Privés* or the 'Sporting'. They are able to say they have been to the opera. That is enough!

Yes, the temptation to talk about gambling and, in so small a place, to run in and try to make the few louis necessary for your theatre tickets, a new hat, your lunch, a parasol, is an ever-present one. It begins at ten o'clock in the morning and it continues until the small hours. It was a parasol that brought François Blanc down in the story which, whether it is legendary or not, might so very well be true. Madame Blanc, strolling about Homburg or perhaps Monte Carlo itself with her husband, sees in a shop window a parasol which pleases her. She must have it. François must produce the louis or the twenty marks at which it is priced. He protests. She persists. At last, 'All right, my dear,' he says; 'I will go into the Rooms, make the little sum at the tables and come out. Sit down here a minute. I'll be back directly.'

François enters the Rooms and puts, say, a louis on red. Black turns up. He puts two louis on red. Black again. To cut a long story short, he doubles and doubles, always choosing the wrong colour, until he has lost seven times running, a hundred and twenty-seven louis, almost all the money he has on him. He could have asked for more

from the *caisse*, of course, if he had chosen, but he did not choose. He knew he had been playing in the silliest way imaginable. Doubling up against the bank! Idiotic. He had lost so much, and, even if he had borrowed and doubled once more, his stake would be a hundred and twenty-eight louis, and, if he won, his net gain would be one single louis. It was out of such fools as he had just been that the Blanc fortune was made. François made his way out of the building in an exceedingly bad temper. Had he not made an example of himself?

Certainly Madame achieved her parasol, but I know not whether she was told that it cost a hundred and twenty-eight louis, then about a hundred pounds!

Yes, a very, very silly game that of doubling up against the bank, risking large sums to win one louis, one unit. Absurd! Far better to let the Bank double up against you. In that way you may – you may – if you guess a colour or other even chance correctly seven times running, turn a louis into a hundred and twenty-eight louis. Watch the tables and you will see that there are many such runs of seven. The advantages of this 'system' are that to put it to the test once you need only a ten-franc note; that, if you are successful in the first coups and get nervous, you need not wait for the whole series of seven risks but can withdraw your stake and your winnings at any stage anterior to the accumulation of the full sum you have set out to win; that you can change your mind and cease playing at your own fancy, whereas the bank has to go on willy-nilly. And while you may win a comparatively large sum from your initial stake, the bank cannot win more from you than the amount of that stake, your ten francs or your louis.

He was of a cheerful and easy temper, and a great deal of his time was spent in the study of the Greek and Latin languages. He was a great reader, and his library was one of the best in the country. He was also a great collector of books, and his collection was one of the most valuable in the country.

He was a great friend to the poor, and he was always ready to help them in any way he could. He was also a great friend to the arts and sciences, and he was always ready to support them in any way he could. He was a great friend to the country, and he was always ready to do what he could for it. He was a great friend to the world, and he was always ready to do what he could for it.

When I was at school, I was very much interested in the life of Samuel Johnson. I was very much interested in his life, and I was very much interested in his work. I was very much interested in his life, and I was very much interested in his work. I was very much interested in his life, and I was very much interested in his work.

the Casino authorities went to all lengths to find a clue to, was simply based on what the author maintains is a psychological fact, that 'every man who goes out to win big money because he *must* win big money losses'. The system-player explains: 'I gather from you that it is necessary for you to have a lot of money and when a man goes out to win that money he loses.' 'Always?' 'In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. I think the percentage is a little higher. I kept very complete psychological data during the first few years I was at Monte Carlo, and I think it works out at 99·4 per cent.' Later on he tells the heroine all about his 'system' and she in return repeats the story to her fiancé. 'There are conditions under which a gambler *cannot* win. If a man is worried about some outside matter, if he is losing steadily and cannot afford to lose, or if he comes to the tables and simply must win money, Mr. Twyford knew that whatever else happened his money would go, and the majority of his stakes would vanish. And when he found this out he took the trouble to discover who at Monte Carlo was in trouble, who wanted money very badly, who was playing with their last stakes – and he played against them. If they backed red, he backed black, if they backed *couleur*, he backed *inverse*. . . .' The same applies, of course, to all even chance playing – at roulette, for instance. A striking and amusing story, told in Mr. Wallace's most workmanlike manner. Read it if you can.

Mr. Wallace deals with the case of a young girl and her fiancé. The young married couple on the Riviera suffers in ways less serious than through losses in the Casino. There are the other visitors to their hotel who will not leave husband or wife alone. I have friends who went

APPROACHES TO GAMBLING

from the altar to the Channel boat and from the Channel boat to Nice. An old-fashioned hotel on the Promenade des Anglais. The bride was smart; she had foreign blood. But she was a bride and the old ladies who collect in every old-fashioned hotel on the Riviera took very kindly to her. So young and so simple and so good-looking and so well dressed! 'Yes, her husband's very nice too, but not good enough for her' was the feminine verdict, and gradually the old ladies got into the habit of monopolizing much of her time. Charles would leave her in the lounge for five minutes and, returning, would find her inextricably engaged in playing whist or halma or holding wool or doing something or other that interfered with his wishes and plans. He remonstrated. She promised reform. Things were no better. 'You see, it's so difficult, Charlie,' she told him. 'I can't be rude to the old dears. They mean it so nicely.'

'Very well, Sybil, I shall have to act myself,' Charles replied.

That afternoon his wife could not understand why, instead of driving out after lunch and having tea at Beaulieu or some other delectable spot, Charles insisted on returning early to the hotel.

'Come along, Sybil, we'll have tea,' he called out. 'All right; go upstairs first if you must; I'll find a good table and order tea.'

But it was not 'a good table' that he looked for. On her return Sybil was astonished to find that he had chosen one which was surrounded by the tables of the old, solid, very respectable visitors to the hotel.

They sat down and tea was brought. Charles declared that his wife must let him pour out. 'You're tired,' he

said. Then he paused, milk-jug in hand: 'I forget, do you take milk in your tea?'

A funny thing for him to ask his wife, the neighbours thought, lifting their eyebrows slightly. But young men are very odd. Then for a minute or two Charles was silent. His wife tried to make him talk. Of a sudden he brightened: 'Sybil,' he said, raising his voice a little; 'Sybil, have you ever been on the Riviera before?'

It was as if he had dropped a brick.

After that the old ladies would pass Sybil as if she were not there. What more efficient action, after all, could my friend have taken to avoid sharing the company of his wife with the whole hotel?

I wrote just now as if it were comparatively easy to seize the right opportunity and to turn one louis into a hundred and twenty-eight. It is not. I have seen a man, experimenting in this way on all four of the chances at trente-et-quarante at the same time, do it twice in half an hour, but the chance of his doing it as the result of his putting down one single louis once is exactly one hundred and twenty-seven to one! Monsieur Chateau has a lot to say about that kind of thing in *Le Secret du Docteur Ludus*. Indeed, that ingenious novel has a deal of interesting argument about gambling in general. One character makes another understand logically the real and even enormous advantage that the bank has over the player at roulette: 1·35 per cent. on all the even chances; 2·7 per cent. on all the other chances—not quite 3 per cent., you see! At trente-et-quarante, in which there are only even chances, the advantage is slightly less: 1·27 per cent. In short, he makes it clear to intelligence that this percentage is, as I have said

elsewhere, on each coup risked by the player. It is out of the proceeds of that unavoidable percentage that the old Prince of Monaco carried on his scientific researches, the present Prince lives, the inhabitants of Monaco are spared the payment of taxes, the Casino is (or rather used to be – for now it exacts entrance fees and allows its croupiers to accept tips) kept up, the public services are maintained, the streets and gardens, terraces and amusements are paid for or subsidized, and, out of it too, the shareholder has up to the present received an extravagant interest on his investment.

Now the official position of Monsieur Chateau makes it pretty certain that he knows more about systems as applied to the two chief Monte Carlo games than anyone else alive and that when he says a thing is so, it is really so. His Docteur Ludus, who spent years of hard endeavour in learning how to ‘break the bank’ – there is no such thing really; all that is meant by the phrase is that the *chef-croupier* calls a halt while he sends for fresh funds for that particular table, and even that, Sir Hiram Maxim asserts, is often only a fake move for the sake of the advertisement it is to the Casino to have it said, and perhaps telegraphed abroad, that So-and-so has ‘broken the bank’ – Docteur Ludus deals with the mathematician’s dogma that while twenty-seven is the longest run that has ever been known on a simple chance, chosen beforehand, say red, there is no reason at all why at roulette somewhere, at some time, there should not be a run of five hundred. Docteur Ludus does not agree.

‘Five hundred! We needn’t talk of five hundred. Let’s be content with a hundred. I don’t tell you that a run of five hundred is only a question of time, that

some day it will happen. No, I declare, with, so to say, the table of logarithms in my hand, that such a run is impossible.' According to Docteur Ludus, a run of twenty on red should, on the average, only turn up, reckoning ten roulette tables in the Casino on each of which the ball is spun at the rate of five hundred times a day, that is to say, at the rate of five thousand times a day for all ten tables, and 182,500,000 times in a century — a run of twenty should only turn up in the whole Casino once in three and three-quarter years. Not being a mathematician I do not follow him when he adds that a run of red *or* black on the average should turn up only once in twenty-two months. 'In the same conditions a run of thirty reds should happen once in five thousand years and a run of thirty reds *or* blacks once in two thousand five hundred years. A run of fifty reds should require nine milliards of years, and four and a half milliards of years should be required for a run of fifty on red *or* black. In fact, for us to reach a run of a hundred reds it would be necessary for all those ten tables to play day by day for a number of *centuries* that you can only write down by using twenty-four figures! . . .' I had to turn up the word milliard in Bellows's 'French Dictionary'. It means a thousand million!

Taking Monsieur Chateau's figures, as one is bound to do, as infallible, I should yet like to have heard Sir Hiram Maxim on the implied argument. He would, I fancy, have pointed out that while a run of, say, fifty on either red or black would seem on such figures a miracle, yet it is just such a miracle that occurs in every permanence, every record, of fifty coups. The chances against any fifty spins resulting in the ball falling into red or black

partitions in the order in which your record shows that it did fall, is exactly the same as the odds against it falling into the red fifty times running. . . . Docteur Ludus did not deal with that point, not because Monsieur Chateau, his creator, had not thought of it, but because after all he was writing a novel and not a treatise. . . .

In that book of Monsieur Chateau I find a new superstition, new to me at least. One chattering character asks another how a woman they both know manages to win so regularly. 'Why, don't you know?' she is answered. 'She only wins when her husband stands behind her chair.' 'Why? I don't follow.' 'Innocent! *Parce qu'il est cocu, son mari*. That's the reason.'

And a delicious example of the absurd ideas the players carry about with them:

" 'I know a gentleman,' says one voice, 'who wins a great deal. He always plays on thirty-two.'

'Ah, thirty-two. Is that a very good number?'

'Thirty-two. I should just think it was. Remember that thirty-two comes next to zero on the wheel. And zero is the number the Bank wins on — you understand?'

'But if thirty-two is good, then zero must be still better to play, surely?'

'That depends. When the players have a lot on it it doesn't come up.' "

Ludus puts too, rather better than anyone else, the effect of gambling on the character. He is remarking on the fact that his mistress, newly come to Monte Carlo and new to gambling, has not yet had time to lose the idea of the value of money:

" 'But you'll lose it in the long run, if we stop here, . . .

Players always lose the sense of the value of money. A man who would hesitate to stand himself a glass of beer will throw without hesitation a hundred-franc note on the table. He wouldn't think of buying shares in a company in which he believed there was any serious chance of a drop of a few points by next settling day, but he would stick two or three thousand francs on a column or a dozen where he has only twelve chances out of thirty-seven of doubling his stake and twenty-seven out of thirty-seven of losing it altogether. If he wins, he goes off to lunch or dinner at the Hotel de Paris, buys jewels, does absurd things generally. If he loses, he behaves in just the same ridiculous way – in the first place, to console himself for having lost; in the second, because he is quite sure that next day he will not only win back what he has lost, but that he'll make a good deal more on top of it.' ”

And one more delicious conversation from Monsieur Chateau's book:

It begins with one commencing-player, a dealer in pianos, talking to another more experienced:

“ ‘Perhaps you happen to know a simple little system which would enable me to win, say, a hundred francs a day?’ ”

‘You are modest, Monsieur.’

‘Well, you see, I don't want to risk much – not more than a couple of hundred francs a day.’

The man of experience turned towards his questioner and regarded him with an air of contempt. ‘Do you know,’ he asked, ‘many businesses which are able to make a hundred francs every day out of every two hundred francs of their capital, that is to say, 50 per cent. – 18,250 per cent. *per annum*?’

'Yes, but this is gambling!' the piano dealer objected.

The man of experience laughed and pointed out that the Bank is content with a very, very much smaller proportion of profit. And even so it needs an army of employees, an enormous capital, thirty tables of roulette and trente-et-quarante working at least ten hours a day. True, the Bank makes over a hundred and forty-three million francs a year, but to gain that sum it has only on its side the 'real advantage' of zero and the *refait* (the trente-et-quarante equivalent to zero). 'And you, Monsieur, you have the cheek to think you can win 50 per cent. a day when out of every seventy-four coups you play one will be automatically confiscated by the Bank as the result of that zero.'

'Ah, I didn't see the question in quite that light before.'

'Certainly with your two hundred francs you have a chance of making a fortune, but the probabilities are against you. Thus your chance of turning your two hundred francs into a hundred thousand on any even chance is equal to the probability of your drawing a number chosen by you in advance out of an urn which contains five hundred numbers. On the other hand, you have nineteen chances out of thirty-seven of losing your two hundred francs at your first coup.'

'How you must have worked to know all that!'

'It's experience that I've gained. It's cost me a lot.'

'And now you win regularly!'

'I keep more or less even.'

The man of experience raised himself on his toes and then let himself down again. 'Nobody,' he added, 'can make a steady income here. It's a legend, that. If some one had discovered a certain way of winning a hundred

francs a day he would have found at the same time the way of making ten thousand or even more.' ”¹

The conversation came to its natural end.

There are plenty of people, of course, who do not play on even chances or dozens but place all their faith in numbers. One of them swam into my ken last Easter. A middle-aged lady, sharp-faced, certainly of no rich appearance, she darted to the table at which I was standing and, as the ball was spun, asked the croupier to distribute five thousand francs in maximums on and around the number 35. Then she disappeared, to return in time to learn before the next spin whether she had won or lost. Having lost, she repeated the investment. She lost five thousand francs six or seven times running. Her regular disappearances roused my curiosity and I went off to find out what became of her. She was playing on two other tables at the same time with the same stakes on the same number! Three tables in all! On one I saw her win. She got an *en plein* as they say: thirty-five turned up. She made a very considerable sum. But nothing to what she had been losing. Then, after more losses, she won at the original table. *En plein*. She drew in her winnings and threw a plaque of a hundred francs across to the *chef*. He thought, he had every right to think, that it was a tip, that it was to be placed in the croupiers' slot, the contents of which, by the way, they have to share with the Casino in the proportion of 40 per cent. to the croupiers themselves, and

¹ Many, many people however believe that it is not only possible to make a small and regular daily income at the Tables, but that it is regularly done. Mr. C. A. Voigt, for instance, in *Riviera Rambles*. He writes as if the making the amount of one's bill at a cheap hotel was 'easy' – 'if you have a small capital and play prudently'.

60 per cent. to other funds which, it is held, are administered in the interests of the employés themselves. The plaque was duly deposited. But in a moment the lady demanded change, change for the plaque. Who said she intended it for the box? Absurd! The money was restored to her. Everybody gasped. How in heaven's name could she expect to get an *en plein* if she showed such unparalleled meanness? Most people will tell you that if the really expert croupiers cannot throw any particular number on the roulette board they can at least throw *against* any particular number. Would the man with the ball avoid thirty-five after that experience? Would he not? If he could!

Well, whether thirty-five did turn up again that evening or not, I do not know; I had to go off to dinner. But the good woman continued for several days backing it in the same way. An unromantic little soul she looked, rather like an English rural-postmistress. I went away for a week and returned: she was playing the same game, but in plaques of a hundred francs instead of notes of a thousand. I went away for four months, and one of the first people I saw on my return was 'Number Thirty-five' as we had learned to call her. She had, I was told, gone to live in a cheap hotel in the Condamine and had abandoned her number. I saw her play the next day. Trente-et-quarante. Forty francs at a time. There was insanity in her eyes.

And there is a man whom I watch occasionally. Not that he plays now. He has no money to play with. The Casino allows him as a charity – a thousand francs a month in recognition of all he has done for it. He really did create a record – for losing! Millions of pounds, they

say! A fine upstanding figure of a man; a fine head. Years before the War he was one of the two or three richest men in his country of – well, it does not matter. He was king of a huge industry. Gambling took him by the throat. He lost and lost and lost. Maximums, maximums, maximums! How he could have got through so huge a fortune even on the tables of Monte Carlo, I cannot think. After all, one cannot lose more than a certain proportion of one's stakes. One would have thought it impossible to shed so much money. But he played early and late. And after a while he had not a penny. Now he can just exist on the 'charity' of the Société des Bains de Mer. . . .

Oh, and I know other men, and I know other women who have lost all they had. Their friends send them the money to come home; it goes on the tables. They send them more money; it goes on the tables. Who does win at Monte Carlo? I sometimes ask myself. Who? Lots of people win small sums and some people win large sums. But do they keep their winnings? Seldom. Consult Mr. Charles Kingston's book for particulars of what happened to several large winners.

And yet I believe that François Blanc and his son, Camille, were both of them in terror of a system being found which would really break the bank. And so I believe are the men at present in power. I suppose it is natural. The Blanc millions would have crumbled away if a system *had* been found – if, that is to say, the discoverer had not been 'put away' first! (Queer stories are told of what happened to the man who won too much and too regularly under the early Blanc régime!) If there is

APPROACHES TO GAMBLING

not a haunting terror of this kind in the secret chambers of the Casino, why in the name of wonder does the Administration keep a department for the examination and investigation of systems, of every fresh system that comes into the Rooms. Suppose for a moment that you have thought one out which at first seems to differ from all the others which have been played ever since Homburg was founded as a gaming-place, and that, going into the Casino, you play it with the expected success. The *chef* notices. They notice everything in those rooms! He makes a sign to one of the perambulating detectives who at once takes up his position behind you and watches your game, calculates your stakes, if possible memorizes what you are writing down on your card or in your little book. If it is not clear to him as an unimportant variant of some old and exploded system, and especially if, as may easily happen for a while, you go on winning, he sends word upstairs and one in greater authority and with greater experience comes down, watches you in his turn, makes mental or written notes of your method of play, tries to find a reason for each of your stakes, and then goes back to his desk to work it all out. I suppose it is humanly possible that some day he may have the surprise of his life, but I fancy he has never yet felt that that danger threatened his employers.

I ask you, if they were not nervous upstairs, would they go to all that expense and trouble?

The gambling scene at Monte Carlo is curiously unchanged from that earlier one for which François Blanc was also responsible and which Thackeray described so well in *The Kickleburys on the Rhine*.

BATHING AT LARVOTTO; TENNIS
AT ST ROMAN; GOLF AT
MONT AGEL;
‘THAT PIGEON-SHOOTING!’

IF you were, as I have recently been, in Monte Carlo during the summer, you would think that, after gambling, bathing was its chief amusement. So it certainly appears to be in June and through the summer, well indeed into autumn. Personally, I have bathed on the Riviera in February – at Ventimiglia and at Antibes – but that was years ago. In 1927 I made my first experiment in March from the regular bathing-place, and I took the precaution to take a friendly doctor with me to see fair play. It was not really cold. I last bathed on October 30, at the end of a week on each morning of which I threw back the shutters and, looking over towards Roquebrune, could not help exclaiming ‘*This* is certainly the finest morning I have ever seen!’ And warm! And on each of those October days Larvotto, the bathing-place, was crowded with young and old men, with young and old women – although, in preparation for a winter which, down there, may never really come, they had already brought in the diving-board and the raft. The temperature of the water had dropped a little – to 19 degrees – but even so it was warmer than it is at Brighton in August, and when one compared it with the deep water of the Cornish coast one wondered how one could ever have been so Spartan as to believe that bathing in England had any pleasures. On that October 30 I swam far out to sea,

BATHING AT LARVOTTO

certain that I should not get cold, and conscious that the buoyancy of the Mediterranean water – in this respect the Mediterranean has a great advantage over the Atlantic – would prevent any serious fatigue. Yes, I swam far out and was alone to gaze through sunshine at the mountains looking up at the sea, at the Italian hills, at La Turbie and the tower by which marched the Roman hosts into Gaul, at the Calves to which, I reminded myself, the cards were being dealt and the little ivory ball was spinning. . . . Yes, Larvotto, when the wind and the slight tide are in the right direction, is a very happy place in which to spend the day.

Oh, but it has its defects! I will be frank about them. In the old days when first this camouflage of a Society established to promote sea-bathing was started, the bathing-place was in the Bay of Monaco itself, in the Condamine. Indeed, on the landlocked shore which Tom van Oss shows in the frontispiece. That, however, was before the two arms to the harbour were built. Gradually the water became less and less satisfactory: the Condamine and Monte Carlo became more and more built over and the drainage system less sufficient. Personally, I never dared to bathe there, and I never saw anyone else do so. Nobody cared. Nobody cared much about bathing in the season; in the summer Monte Carlo was empty; moreover, French people were not greatly devoted to swimming. By degrees, however, all that changed. A devotion to the sports of the open air spread through France; people, even English people, began to come to the Principality in the summer – so did Americans. The bathing-place was shifted to a beach half-way towards La Vigie, the villa which Sir William

Ingram built out of the profits of the *Illustrated London News* on the rocky promontory, La Vieille, which juts out into the sea between Monte Carlo and Cap Martin. But the same thing has happened. Drains! Larvotto stands midway between two drains and in certain conditions the water is, to put it baldly, very unhealthy. And it looks it. Now that reproach is to be done away with – soon, one day. Not for nothing are the Casino authorities called the Société des Bains de Mer. A huge main drain is being built to serve the whole Principality – and its product is, as I understand it, to be taken right out to sea, beyond Cap Fleuri, which is towards Cap d'Ail. I hope it may be so and that all may have been finished during the 1927–1928 winter, as is promised.

Even as it is, however, Larvotto has, on occasion, great charm. It is *sans gêne*, simple. The thing to do is to walk down at about eleven o'clock – you can drive in an Auto-Riviera omnibus which starts every quarter of an hour or so from the Casino Place and costs 5 fr. – go on to the terrace and look at the water for yourself and ask for the experience of the people who are already bathing. The fact that it may look a little muddy is not necessarily important. That generally is caused by the waves washing at the earth which they are dumping on to the beach not far off as a foundation for the new boulevard which is to run almost to La Vigie, and which it is intended, with so poor an appreciation of the beauties that belong to a rocky and in-and-out coast, shall do away with all the little curves and beaches. In fact, the coast is to be straightened. Absurd? Yes. But you cannot argue with the Administration.

At Larvotto now are reasonably comfortable bathing-

cabins, but none of the luxury of Deauville or even of Juan-les-Pins. The diving-boards are not nearly so ambitious as those at Juan-les-Pins, nor is the luncheon that the Hotel de Paris provides you with on the terrace nearly so good as that you can get at the Casino of that Benjamin of summer resorts. But the place is friendly. And its girl habitués are often very pretty and strikingly well made. One forgets Schopenhauer's opinion of the female figure as one sees some of these young people strolling about, doing physical exercises and, later, lying prone on the beach, gathering sun-burn and in the process finding it more convenient to take their arms out of their shoulder-straps. All the same, everything is very discreet. The male bather has to be covered as to the upper half of his person; one arm he can slip out of his maillot; should he slip both, as one elderly German would insist on doing, he is promptly called to order by one of the staff. That staff, by the way, is not a nuisance in the way that it is in so many Continental bathing-places. There is no man with a horn to warn you you have swum too far out. You can swim as far out as you jolly well please. Perhaps in these waters, with so little tide, the conditions that make Ostend, say, a very unpleasant place for the swimmer are entirely lacking. At Ostend, too, the water is generally opaque. At Monte Carlo and all along this coast it has a crystal clearness.

There is a solarium for men and another for women at Larvotto. I do not like the idea myself. Schopenhauer may be right about women, but men have generally nothing to boast about when in their birthday suits. By the way, one of the new big apartment houses overlooks, from some distance, the place in which the

women lie for hours bringing their skin to the required shade.

What does Larvotto cost the visitor? If you have your own costume and your own towel, only four francs a time. And for that equivalent of eight pennies or sixteen cents you can keep your cabin all day, while you sun-bathe, exercise, drink cocktails, bathe again, lunch and then bathe yet again.

I myself often push on considerably beyond Larvotto, to the curve of the bay under La Vigie. There I undress on the beach and bathe in water more surely clean. That, however, may soon be impossible, for this stretch is commanded by the new Country Club, to which I shall take you directly. Indeed, it is the intention to make the beach itself the site of a wonderful new bathing establishment which shall be the last word in luxury. Well and good, if they really get rid of the drainage horror. If they do not succeed in that, they are wasting their money. At present many people, rather than bathe at Larvotto, bathe from the little beach of Cap d'Ail. That is charming. It boasts a rustic restaurant where they certainly do not feed you worse than at Larvotto. The Hotel de Paris should really pull itself together. Fleury should don a false beard and inspect the exterior activities of the Hotel for himself. But I hear that he is retiring. I do hope not. He belongs so well to the Monte Carlo tradition.

One caution about Larvotto. The beach is made up of small and large pebbles and shelves so rapidly that one is out of one's depth before one knows it. That, you will say, matters little if you can swim, but it does matter when it is at all rough. Perhaps you have been out to the raft and are coming back to shore. It may happen that you

will find considerable difficulty in getting through the last few yards of water. The stones make a most insecure foothold and the undertow from the breaking waves is very strong. . . .

Larvotto *may* remain the official bathing-place of the Société for much longer than is now contemplated. It would seem that the new boulevard was embarked upon without due consideration. Certainly it is creating a new quarter in Monte Carlo, is tremendously sending up the value of land along this hitherto neglected bit of coast and to that extent somebody, no doubt, is already greatly benefiting, but it is costing a very great deal at a time when, according to rumour, the coffers of the Société are rather depleted, and, most seriously of all, rumour says that certain stubborn landowners have rights over the cliff, and even over the foreshore, towards La Vigie, which make it impossible that the scheme should be pushed on until they have been adequately compensated. The small landowner is not so easily dealt with. Sir William Ingram found that. He made, I believe, exactly the same mistake: he built La Vigie and then found he had no right of way to it! One hears of lawsuits in connection with the landowners and even of a lawsuit with the P.L.M. If this last is true, it seems to me that someone has blundered woefully. The railway company would be ungrateful if it did anything unreasonable in opposing the plans of the Société, considering how much money it has earned as the direct result of the energy of François Blanc and his successors. As for the other lawsuits – the Société has resources. One of the landowners is a friend of mine and he told me what he wanted. I was astonished at his moderation. Personally, however, as one who hopes to

spend a certain amount of time at Monte Carlo, I deplore the whole enterprise. It is true the upper road is very crowded, but this new boulevard, if pushed to its appointed end, will destroy the last bit of unspoiled coast in the Principality. Also the scheme means the further urbanization of Monaco as a whole. Look, for instance, what havoc the continuation of the Avenue des Fleurs will cause. Perhaps we who love the slope of villas that falls so gently to the railway and then to the shore beyond, need not cross that bridge until we come to it. The Administration has its hands full and it has even, if I am not misinformed, to get over certain objections that the owner of the ground on which the new tennis courts are planned has to his property being used for other purposes than those of floriculture. I do not know what truth there is in this story. It is the more interesting in that the new courts are in France and not in the Principality. It makes a vast difference. Obviously the Administration's influence is less strong over the frontier. That, I suppose, is what gave pause to the plan of building a new and gorgeous Casino hard by the new courts and the new bathing-place. Being in France, it would not be permitted to play roulette and trente-et-quarante, and for the Administration to have a casino devoted entirely to baccarat, chemin-de-fer and boule under French law and surveillance — well, it required consideration. They say now that the scheme has had all the consideration required and that the new Casino is to be built. We shall see.

Tennis. I wish I knew even as much about lawn-tennis as I do about bathing. For years the tennis at Monte Carlo, the tennis, that is to say, at La Festa, on

TENNIS AT ST. ROMAN

the hill behind the Crédit Lyonnais and down in the Condamine, has been in the capable hands of Mr. William G. Henley, the secretary of the Fédération Monégasque de Lawn-Tennis, who used to be the British Consul for these parts. Write to him at La Festa and he will tell you all about it. If you are respectable, no difficulty will be made about your becoming a member. Subscriptions cost very little; a member can introduce guests. In 1927 Mr. Henley controlled ten courts, three at La Festa, one on the golf-course at Mont Agel, and six down in the Condamine – but for some reason nobody who could manage to get a court at La Festa would play at the Condamine. With the exception of the court at Mont Agel, all these, with the end of 1927, were put out of commission, the idea being that the tennis activities of the Principality were to be centred at St. Roman under the comprehensive name of La Festa Country Club. And at the new La Festa the player was royally provided for. Dressing-rooms with gold lockers and silver floors, or something of that kind . . . anyhow, the last word in luxury. Shower baths, a good restaurant, access to the beach and the sea. Oh, everything! Even a telephone in every cabin – as if a Rivieran telephone was much of an advantage!

I can believe that every now and then the older player will find himself regretting the primitive simplicity of the first La Festa. But Mr. Henley would make a success of a funeral; he has already made a success of St. Roman. With twenty courts he has more scope. There are as famous players on the new courts as there were on the old; there will be as hard-fought matches. Hard courts, of course. The tournaments in the spring of 1928

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

had entrants from twenty-five nations. Do not, however, let that deter you, your daughters and your sons. The commencing-amateur flourished at the old La Festa, where behind the wire netting was always somebody long-



MR. HENLEY, SECRETARY OF LA
FESTA TENNIS CLUB, MONTE
CARLO

ing to take your place at the net; he will flourish all the more at the new. If you do not play well, then you can be taught to play. Much can be done with patience. I have watched the process. There is a clubhouse and a good restaurant overlooking the courts. I am inclined to think that the money that the Administration spends on lawn-tennis provides it with its best advertisement.

Now, quite frankly, I have been up to the Mont Agel golf course once and once only.

You can drive all the way from the Place du Casino in the Administration's motor-cars. Myself, I went up by funicular to La Turbie and then took a motor-car. There are always cars waiting at the station. Our driver was a bearded Russian, but that need not have surprised us. Lots of the taxi-drivers in Paris are Rus-

sians, and I even know Russian princes who drive you about in cars that are better than taxis for no great fee – but they do not tell you of their rank. The La Turbie Russian was a driver: he hurried us round those hairpin bends as if he had a train to catch. Mont Agel looks an easy walk from La Turbie; it is not. But the golf course is beautiful. Only a man with Camille Blanc's imagination could have thought of making a course up on those mountains. It meant carting an endless amount of soil, and I believe that in the first winter season most of it got swept away. Perseverance, said Camille Blanc. The course is stable enough now and the air is wonderful – and, in the winter, cold, but seldom too cold. Below sparkles the Mediterranean. When your round is over you can go into the Club House and have a good lunch for twenty francs, a really good lunch if my experience is anything to go by. The conditions affecting membership and so on you get by writing to Mr. J. H. Brooke, Golf-Club, Mont Agel, La Turbie, A/M, France. A month's subscription is two hundred francs. Cheap enough!

Standing on the terrace above the station at La Turbie, I looked down and tried to pick out the old La Festa tennis courts. I did not succeed. But I saw a blank space which seemed curious in so tightly welded a mass of houses. Inquiry led me to the knowledge that it was the ground of the Monégasque Football Club! These Monégasques are becoming very energetic, independent and athletic. We shall be having them sending a team to England directly. Why not? Monaco did once send ships to attack Southampton! Under the Monégasque, Carlo Grimaldi, the Genoese division did a lot of harm in

Hampshire. Troops were landed and behaved in a thoroughly Saracenesque manner, looting and ravishing and massacring to their heart's content. Carlo Grimaldi's share of the plunder enabled him to purchase the town of Eze.

Do not expect me to tell you anything about pigeon-shooting. I know little about it except that *The Times* has every spring indignant letters from censorious Britons calling upon all English and American holiday-makers to shun Monte Carlo until the 'sport' has been banished from the Principality. The last ruler of Monaco disliked pigeon-shooting too and promised to interfere, but he appears to have been too busy to carry his promise out. It is said that when you have pigeon pie in any of the restaurants or pigeons in any fashion they are from the bag of the sportsmen on the pigeon-shooting ground below, and that the pigeons that look so pleasant and are so tame in the Casino Place are those which have been lucky enough to escape from the gun of the unskilful shot. And that reminds me of a true story about William Heinemann, the publisher, which I do not suppose he would have minded my telling. He and Victor Bethell had worked out between them an ingenious method by which, by watching the way the cards fell at trente-et-quarante, they could hope to have a small advantage over the bank. One night the system worked very well indeed and Heinemann returned to his hotel, the Paris, with two or three thousand pounds of winnings in his pocket. A killing! But, unhappily, it was so late that the safe of the hotel was no longer available and the money had to be taken up to bed. Always rather a nervous man, Heinemann was very nervous on that occasion.

‘THAT PIGEON-SHOOTING!’

The game had been exciting and the idea of sleeping with so much money in his possession unsettled him. However, hiding it in his room, he went to bed and after a while to a troubled sleep. A very troubled sleep, for just before dawn he was awakened by a strange noise. Some one in the room. A noise, a rustling, and then silence. It was as if an intruder was feeling about as quietly as possible for something he hoped to find. Searching for the bank-notes! Really it was rather terrible. Heinemann told me that after a minute's irresolution he leapt out of bed, turning on the light as he did so. He could see no one. The room surely had no place in which a thief could hide. He stood quietly, disturbed and wondering. Then the noise began again. Yes, certainly some one was in the room . . . the noise came from the top of the canopy over the bed. Better to summon assistance before harm could be done. Holding his breath, and as quietly as possible, he put out his hand and touched the bell; one of the night watchmen came after too long an interval to his door. Together they searched and in the end they found the intruder—a wounded pigeon which had flown into the room during the day and had hidden itself to die in the dark space between canopy and ceiling!

Very big betting goes on on the pigeon-shooting ground. There have been scandals. If one goes through the record of the various contests since they began one sees at once that it is not the Anglo-Saxon who is the best at the game. Italians do very well. They shoot for all sorts of prizes—money, cases of champagne. Some of the shots in the old days made a very cheery crowd. Harry Roberts, R. B. Heygate, Jack Hayley, ‘Bat’

Hersee, Lord Savile, Percy Thelusson, 'Bob' Beresford, who has written two books about Monte Carlo since then, Lord Rosslyn—these are names of Englishmen which occur to the memory. Harry Roberts used to live at Aubanel's Princesse, the restaurant on which Madame Melba smiled. Aubanel, alas! is no more, and his hotel is a bank. One sees Madame Aubanel, his English wife, occasionally. She has a beautiful villa, near the Pistonato, in the new quarter. Mr. George Cooper was, I think, the chief layer of odds on the pigeon ground in that time. I am told that much of the old careless bonhomie has departed, but then, as the adherents of the 'High Toryism, High Churchism, High Farming and Old Port for Ever' school are never tired of proclaiming, most of the careless bonhomie has gone out of life. Anyhow, if you want to shoot pigeons write to the secretary, Monsieur M. J. Brousse, Tir aux Pigeons, Monte Carlo. I am interested to see that certain prizes will be offered to ladies only if there are enough likely entrants to make it worth while. The 'sport' is carried on on the plateau of grass just below the Terrace, on the other side of the railway line, by the station. Pop, pop, the noise goes on all the time that they are shooting, and if you pause to look at the view from the Terrace you see the birds fall, or escape, or flutter wounded away, whether you want to or not. I have friends who refuse to go near the Terrace when shooting is toward. As an inducement to wealthy foreigners and sportsmen to come to Monte Carlo I believe that the Administration vastly overrates pigeon-shooting. It can have nothing like the same effect in that direction as tennis.

They tell a rather good story of which Monte Carlo

‘THAT PIGEON-SHOOTING!’

pigeon-shooting is the motive, a story which requires the pen of Baron Corvo to do justice to it. I do hope that in my own clumsier hands it may not sound irreverent: Recently the Almighty looked down upon the world and found that it had grown exceeding wicked. There must, he said, be a cleansing, and no one could say him nay, for the misdeeds of men were a scandal in heaven. This, I suppose, is my job? the Spirit said – a comment rather than a question, for he knew the answer. Where shall I begin? he continued. Monte Carlo is of all places the most wicked, came the reply, and with Monte Carlo you shall start. Monte Carlo is to share the fate of yesterday’s Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall be so, the Spirit said, and was departing on his errand. But he was commanded to pause. Tell me, what is the date? December the 22nd, Sir. The Almighty pondered for a moment. No, to visit man with my wrath at this moment would be cruel. They are preparing for their Christmas festivities. There are gala-dinners. Everybody is looking forward to enjoying himself. Hold your hand for a while. Ten days? Yes, ten days. The Spirit, consulting his tablets, took a pen to make the necessary note: Sir, he cried in some trepidation, that date would be a very bad one – Sir, ten days will bring us to January 1 and on that day *le tir aux pigeons commence!*

Since I wrote the above paragraphs I have revisited the pigeon-shooting ground. I want to take back the spirit of what I have written. I do not like the idea of the birds being killed, but I cannot help liking the cheerfulness of the shooters, their friendliness, their enthusiasm, their sporting qualities – and their skill. I shall always remember Mr. Sutherland’s achievements in 1928.

MONTE CARLO: THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE HIGH SEASON

MY friends know that I am fitted neither by nature nor education nor taste to express any opinion where music is concerned, so that in writing about the musical attractions of Monte Carlo it behoves me to walk with extreme wariness. I do, however, believe that I am right when I say that Monte Carlo is a little behind the times. So, at least, I am told by the highbrows among whom my lot is so often cast. My own experience in attempting to enjoy the musical programmes would lead me to suppose that only music of the most abstract and difficult kind is played. (I miss the tunes!) I know, however, that that cannot be so. The truth is, I think, that Verdi, Puccini, Wagner are still the musical gods of Monaco. So may they be, but perhaps my friends are right when they plead for a little more variety, for a more adventurous and modern spirit. My own private quarrel with the Administration is that, although its gardens are studded with musical pavilions and bandstands, you can, for nearly all the hours of the day, hear no music of any kind unless you sit in, or outside, the Café de Paris, or, at meal-times, in one or other of the more expensive restaurants. (One is grateful sometimes that Quinto, like the Café Royal in London, has no band.) I have a suggestion to make to Miss Elsa Maxwell, or whoever has the ear of the authorities in this and kindred matters. Let the Administration spend just a little more money; let it show a little more imagination. Let there be music

MONTE CARLO: ATTRACTIONS

all through the day in one or other of all the bandstands that at present encumber the gardens and terraces. It would not cost so very much and it would attract shoals of those small fishes, the conducted tourists, to whom 'a bit o' music' in the sunshine is worth all the fine scenery in the world. I know of course that in the warm months there is every evening at nine o'clock a concert, Grand or otherwise, on the Terrace. You can listen to it for nothing, but you will listen to it more comfortably if you sit down at one of the little tables and order coffee and a liqueur. You are not expected to order drinks; there are other seats, or you can stroll on the Terrace, listening to the music as you walk. But those summer evening concerts and the indoor evening concerts of the winter, for which you have to pay, are not enough. . . . Think how much more cheerfully the little victims would flock to their doom if, as each train from Paris, or from Nice or Menton, arrived in the station, a spirited band of the military sort, stationed in the bandstand over the station yard, would break into some popular strain - 'See the Conquering Hero Comes' perhaps, a regular slap-up tune anyhow, whether it be definitely welcoming, out of the last success at the Capucines or a pot-pourri from Gilbert and Sullivan. Aix-les-Bains has less money than Monte Carlo, but I believe that it has far, far more music. But here are the programmes of some of the Terrace evening concerts. (Notice the difference between Concert and Grand Concert):

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

15 SEPTEMBRE 1927

GRAND CONCERT

SOUS LA DIRECTION DE M. MARC-CÉSAR SCOTTO

Rouslane et Ludmila	GLINKA
Le Vieux Moulin	M.-C. SCOTTO

Cor anglais: M. PARIOT.

Cor: M. REUMONT.

La Fille du Far-West	PUCCINI
Symphoniette en La	RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF
<i>Ouverture</i> des Saltimbanques	L. GANNE
Mazeppa (Ballet)	LOUISE DE GRANDVAL
Introduction et Humoresque	D'AMBROSIO

Violon solo: M. PRADÈRES.

<i>Marche des Fiançailles</i> de Lohengrin	WAGNER
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16 SEPTEMBRE 1927

CONCERT

SOUS LA DIRECTION DE M. L.-J. BORGHINI

Le Roi d'Ys (Ouverture)	ED. LALO
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Violoncelle solo: M. A. CAPPONI.

Mia Carina (Valse Caprice)	L.-J. BORGHINI
<i>Prélude</i> de Loreley	MAX BRUCK
La Traviata	VERDI

Grande Fantaisie arrangée par Borelli.

Solistes: Flûte, M. FRÉMY;

Piston, M. CHAVANNE.

MONTE CARLO: ATTRACTIONS

Fantoches et Pantins	RAZIGADE
Chant du Soir	SCHUMANN
Sérénade	D'AMBROSIO
Violon solo: M. BOYER.	
Cortège de Bacchus	LEO DELIBES

24 SEPTEMBRE 1927

GRAND CONCERT

SOUS LA DIRECTION DE M. MARC-CÉSAR SCOTTO

Le Désert (Ode symphonique)	Ç. DAVID
Hautbois solo: M. DEBATTY.	
Chasse Fantastique (Poème symphonique)	GUIRAUD
CORS: MM. REUMONT, DEFOSSEZ, JEHIN, DARNAUD.	
Mélopée Andalouse	M.-C. SCOTTO
Cor anglais: M. PARIOT.	
Boniment	M.-C. SCOTTO
Pistons soli: MM. CHAVANNE et DERUYCK.	
Le Rouet d'Omphale (Poème symphonique)	SAINT-SAËNS
Deuxième Aubade	LALO
Loin du Bal	GILLET
Tutti in Maschera (Ouverture)	PEDROTTI
Violoncelle solo: M. A. CAPPONI.	

THE COAST OF PLEASURE

29 SEPTEMBRE 1927

CONCERT

SOUS LA DIRECTION DE M. L.-J. BORGHINI

Zanetta (Ouverture) AUBER

Tout Paris (Grande Valse) WALDTEUFEL

Air de Ballet SULLIVAN

Mignon (Grande Fantaisie) A. THOMAS

Solistes: Violoncelle, M. A. CAPPONI;

Flûte, M. FRÉMY;

Piston, M. CHAVANNE;

Violon, M. BOYER.

Preghiera d'Amore BARBIROLI

Violoncelle solo: M. A. CAPPONI.

Capricieuse Marquise KINAPENNE

Soliste: Hautbois, M. DEBATTY.

Bye bye Bolby H. DE BOZI

Célèbre Marche Américaine.

1^{er} OCTOBRE 1927

GRAND CONCERT

SOUS LA DIRECTION DE M. MARC-CÉSAR SCOTTO

L'Arlésienne (Audition intégrale) G. BIZET

Les Erinnyes MASSENET

MONTE CARLO: ATTRACTIONS

8 OCTOBRE 1927

GRAND CONCERT

SOUS LA DIRECTION DE M. MARC-CÉSAR SCOTTO

Sakuntala (Overture)	GOLDMARCK
Quatre Pièces pour Orchestre	D'AMBROSIO
Roméo et Juliette (Overture-Fantaisie)	TCHAIKOWSKY
Fantaisie Hongroise	BURGMEIN

These programmes mean very little to me, but it was certainly very pleasant to listen to them under the stars. One thing, perhaps, they do teach me about the Monte Carlo orchestra: the individual player does get personal credit for his work.

But at Monte Carlo one finds not only concerts but grand opera and 'operettes'.

Let me begin by explaining that while Monte Carlo and its neighbourhood becomes more and more populated, the opera house, the theatre, which is at the farther side of the Atrium, is made no bigger. There has been talk of gutting it and turning the resultant space into a new 'Sporting', but I have no reason to suppose that that scheme will ever go beyond the stage of talk. (The present plan is to instal it in a new building to be built opposite its present position, a new building that will add a fresh beauty to the Monte Carlo scene!) In consequence the number of seats available, especially for the star productions, is much below the number required. They cost forty or fifty francs: there is no room in the theatre for democracy. Book early. In the bad old days – bad in that respect at least – it was often impossible to get tickets. Per-

haps Camille Blanc thought it would not be good for his clients to waste hours in the theatre that they might spend so much more profitably (to him at least) in the Rooms, but whatever the reason, one's hairdresser often had tickets when oneself had tried for them in vain. To-day things are arranged more fairly. If you are at the receipt of custom early enough you will get places without undue difficulty – subject, of course, to their not all having been allotted to the season's subscribers. But to the programme: The ambitious volume I have in my hand is a statement of the season of comedy under the direction of Monsieur René Blum for November to January, 1926–7. It is in its way surprising. The dramatists include MM. Romain Coolus and Maurice Donnay, and, among 'foreigners', Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. Sutton Vane – I like the name they have given to 'Outward Bound': 'Au Grand Large' – and Madame Karen Bramson; the older generation is represented by de Musset's 'Lorenzaccio', Alphonse Daudet's 'L'Arlésienne', and 'Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme'. In the winter of 1927–8 there was a programme of even greater fashion. I recall seeing the names of Monsieur Sacha Guitry, Mademoiselle Yvonne Printemps and Madame Sorel. Among the plays and 'opérettes' were Booth Tarkington's 'Monsieur Beaucaire', 'No, No, Nanette' and 'Rose Marie'. The opera season in 1927, under Monsieur Raoul Gunsbourg, opened on the 25th of January and continued until the 7th of April: Puccini's 'Turandot', Weber's 'Oberon', Strauss's 'Le Chevalier à la Rose', Wagner's 'Parsifal' – other operas by Massenet, Berlioz, Moussorgsky, Verdi, Delibes, Offenbach, Saint-Saëns, continued the programme, a programme which impresses my musical friends and is, no

MONTE CARLO: ATTRACTIONS

doubt, something to be proud of. There followed a season of Russian ballet 'par la troupe de M. Serge de Diaghilew' which extended into May: 'La Chatte', 'Jack in the Box', Sacheverell Sitwell's 'Le Triomphe de Neptune', 'L'Oiseau de Feu', 'Les Facheux', 'Le Lac des Cygnes' – oh, all the well-known ballets. The Administration, when you come to think of it, is as much in the movement as you can expect any such organization to be. You would not see these ballets, these comedies, these operas as comfortably in London, in New York, in Paris. One dines and one strolls across to one's seat. That seat costs less than ten shillings, say a couple of dollars. Who pays the balance? Why, the gamblers who lose, to be sure!

The opportunity to watch fine dancing, the opportunity to dance, and the opportunity to learn to dance, are among the most potent attractions of Monte Carlo, as they are of most of the considerable centres of gaiety along the Riviera. Every restaurant where there is music has its male professional dancers; one or two have girls too. Pretty? More than pretty, often. Some of those who have danced at the Café de Paris have earned very considerable reputations. There was Sonia, a Russian, and, in the following season, a girl, possibly Hungarian, who danced well and who had so exquisite a figure that one felt in the following summer almost ashamed to see her activities more or less confined to appearing, with other beautiful women, in the very nearly nude parades at the Casino de Paris in Paris. These, however, were exhibition dancers. I wrote just now rather of the girls who wait, so to speak, like the men professionals, to dance with any comer – not that they do not know how to evade the

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obligation if they do not like the look of the would-be partner! The male professionals are less fastidious: one



THE MALE PROFESSIONALS ARE
LESS FASTIDIOUS

with rich clients. . . . There are black sheep and there are also some very pleasant fellows – and these last are often

sees them patiently going round with the oldest and least prepossessing of women. There are surprising and notorious instances of which the less said the better. A certain type of man takes very kindly to the rôle of lounge lizard. I do not remember, in the South at least, any Englishman or American shining in this way. The type has generally an Argentine air and at its most successful is very successful indeed. Clothes rather too beautiful; shoes a little too pointed; hair a little too smooth; hands a little too well manicured. It is a very paying profession – sometimes. When one is not dancing after tea or after dinner one gives lessons, and when one is not giving lessons one is taking excursions

MONTE CARLO: ATTRACTIONS

Russians with just too little courage and energy to undertake more strenuous and less luxurious and less well-paid work. The girls do their allotted tasks with little fuss and gossip. It is in their nature to be pretty pets. They become the scene, and if you should take dancing lessons from one of them – and this is true of the men too – you will find them extraordinarily patient. A certain Professeur Rouden Mitchell has started a school of dancing on the steps at the side of the Metropole.

A great centre of dancing both afternoon and evening is the Café de Paris, where, pushed by competition, and under Humberto's expert direction, they have improved the fare. One very pretty girl, Paulette, whom everybody likes, is the chief of the women dancers here. The Hermitage started dancing teas in December, 1927. They are thronged and very correct. There are very *comme-il-faut* professionals at the Metropole. And Sir Francis Towle generally secures for that very English hotel the best exhibition dancers – Marjorie Moss and George Fontana will not be forgotten by those who saw their performances. Then at the Carlton they dance – at about midnight and for as long as there are enough revellers to pay for the light. Indeed, at the Carlton they have often a succession of turns as a supplement to the dancing, a kind of informal music-hall, a real cabaret, I suppose.

Things may happen at some of the night places to shatter even Monte Carlo's austere control. I have seen young ladies throwing glasses of champagne at one another and finishing up by using the bottles in even more strenuous fashion. I remember an Englishwoman, now

unhappily dead, whose presence of mind averted what might have developed into a very disagreeable and dangerous row. She and her husband had begun the evening by giving a big dinner party at the Metropole. Heaped up flowers; a dancer for each woman who had not her own effective partner; almost Roman prodigality. There came a moment when the guests felt that it was time for them to go. Not at all, said their hostess. A table had been engaged for the whole party at another place a biscuit's throw away. (A thing you get to realize quickly is that in all Monte Carlo it is in effect a question of each place having every other place as its next-door neighbour; a minute's stroll.) Supper. More dancing. And suddenly a shriek, followed by a crash. The people who like that kind of thing jumped up from their tables and crowded to see what had happened. A pretty girl had hit one of the men at her table with the butt-end of a bottle. It is true that he had thrown the contents of his glass at her first! Anyhow, he had gone down like a log. His companion, another man, was on the point of 'mixing in' when he was disarmed and frog-marched out of the hall. Uproar. The taking of sides. Our hostess looked at her guests. 'Let's dance - quick!' she cried, and, before they realized, they were all going round the floor as if nothing untoward had happened or was threatening. One thing certainly had happened. The floor where the fracas had been was wet with blood. More than one pretty dancing frock was spoiled in consequence - for it was in the days when skirts were more than knee-length - and more than one pair of satin shoes. But with the band playing and the guests dancing it became impossible for hostilities to continue. There might very easily have been work for

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the morgue that night if it had not been for our hostess's presence of mind and quick resource.

This, perhaps, is the place to say that men never, never, never wear a dress-coat at Monte Carlo or elsewhere on the Riviera. A dinner jacket, a 'smoking', a 'tuxedo' – whatever you may call it – is the only evening wear. By the way, one has seen again and again the question raised in the papers as to when the dinner jacket was first invented and by whom. I think I know. It was the Lord de Clifford of those days, a devoted visitor to Monte Carlo, who, in about 1879, first appeared in this satisfactory garment. His example was immediately followed by his brother, Charles Russell, and by Mr. Frederic Jessel. So these three gentlemen should have all the credit!

MONTE CARLO: A FEW TIPS AND A
CONSIDERATION OF THE POSSI-
BILITY OF THE PRINCIPALITY
REGAINING ITS ASCENDENCY

YES, perhaps the most important of all conventions for a man to observe in Monte Carlo and along this coast is that he must not wear a dress-coat. A dinner-jacket suit is the 'correct wear' for the evening, with, for preference, a white waistcoat. You are not allowed into the 'Sporting' after dinner unless you are dressed, but there is no rule of that kind in the 'kitchen' nor even in the *Salons Privés*. In some restaurants, the smarter and more expensive, custom makes it desirable that a man should dress for dinner to just the extent that I have indicated. At the Café de Paris, except perhaps on gala nights, at Quinto's and in the restaurants of the second class, it is entirely a matter for your choice. Other tips with regard to clothes? Well, leave your bowler in London or Paris and be satisfied during the day with a Homburg hat of some sort, a straw later in the season, or even no hat at all; and in the evening, again, either no hat at all or a black Homburg. There is a hatter, Léon, under the Hotel de Paris who can provide you with the right kind of thing. An opera hat or a silk hat are both of them outrages! so, except in the hills, is a cap. Nor do you ever wear a combination of black coat and striped trousers. The American artist who drew the hero of a novel of mine, *Caviare*, saying Good-bye to the Casino as he paused for a second on its steps, outraged every canon when

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he dressed that successful young man in a tail-coat, black and white striped trousers – and a bowler! ‘Plus-fours’ I have already derided. Wear them if you choose and if you are going to play golf at Mont Agel or for a long tramp in the mountains, but, for the sake of the southern sun, do not wear them in the Casino Place or in restaurant or tea-shop. No, nor on the Promenade des Anglais at Nice, the Croisette at Cannes, the streets of Menton, or in the Réserve at Beaulieu. As a matter of fact, rough materials, tweeds, homespuns, and so on, never look well in the more fashionable parts of the Riviera. Wear white flannel trousers, a white suit, white shoes if you choose and if it is warm enough, after, say, the season is a little advanced, but do not wear rough tweeds. I do not know what tailors call the kinds of material that are just right. Perhaps one can best express it by saying that ‘comfortable’ country clothes look out of place. With overcoats it is different. One uses an overcoat as a wrap. Wear any sort of overcoat in the day, provided it is not too ‘dressy’. An overcoat is absolutely essential. If you have not some kind of overcoat with you when the sun sets you may qualify for burial in some happy spot that overlooks the Mediterranean. As for shoes and shirts and collars and ties, wear those which go happily with the suits I have suggested. Except in the evening, of course, one seldom sees black shoes. Nor spats – except on old gentlemen. No sweaters. No ‘pull-overs’. The whole idea, in fact, is to be comfortable without being sloppy.

What I said just now and earlier in the book about the necessity of having a wrap for the sunset hour is as true for women as it is for men. Women also should avoid

wearing distinctly country clothes – except at golf or in the hills. Otherwise I feel that they need no advice that I can give them. Tailor-mades, yes. If you have one or two tailor-mades of the classical O’Rossen genre, or tailor-mades of a more complicated sort, so much the better. And have afternoon frocks and all the new evening dresses that you can afford. Be as careful in your choice of shoes, stockings and hats as if you were going for a walk in Bond Street or to call on your dressmaker. Remember that it is on the Riviera, at Cannes and at Monte Carlo, that in the very early spring the summer fashions are decided. If you are wealthy you will, it is likely, do well to leave many of your purchases until you actually reach the South. And, to the extent that you do not do that, remember that, while it may be foggy or rainy or frosty in England and Northern Europe in January, down in the South you will possibly experience a succession of beautiful and cloudless days. It seems odd to have to choose white dresses and white hats at a time when you are still breakfasting in the dark, but you will find that you have only wasted your money if you forget that white, or the lightest colours, is the wear for Cannes, Nice and Monte Carlo. Anyhow, in one or other of these three towns you will find the establishments of practically every Parisian dressmaker and milliner of note. Molyneux and Patou, Premet and Lelong, to name but four. Their pretty vendeuses and mannequins – often Russian – are among the most attractive objects of the southern landscape. I know of no good tailor for women on the Riviera, nor of a good tailor for men. But in both cases the fault may be mine. Women who have more modest ideas will find three big department stores in the

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Avenue de la Victoire at Nice, one of them being an efficient branch of the Paris Galeries Lafayette.

And should you fall ill? Well, if you are ordinarily careful at sunset and at night there is no reason why you should fall ill. But still there is the possibility. Oysters, perhaps, or mushrooms. There are plenty of English and American doctors on the Riviera and several in Monte Carlo; there are scores who are French or Italian. And there are very good dentists. It takes away half the discomfort of a visit to a dentist when he carries on his operations at a window wide open to sun and sea. Personally, I found satisfaction with a Frenchman. And, of course, the number of chemists there is in every French town is well known. Cruzel in Monte Carlo and Nichols at 14 Avenue de Verdun in Nice are both English in experience and language. But these are details that you will find in your guide-book, Baedeker or Muirhead.

The guide-book will not tell you, however, that the Rivieran telephone service is the worst in the world. Really it is. Why, I cannot think. It should be a simple enough matter to link up the score of towns and villages that are a chain from St. Raphael to Menton, and, once one line has been provided, surely it can be supplemented by dozens more at no great cost. You are at Monte Carlo, say, and you want to ask some one at Beaulieu to lunch. You may wait half an hour for your connection and then fail to retain it long enough to finish your conversation. . . . Could not the various Syndicats d'Initiative and the casinos and restaurants and hotels which live on the proper functioning of the complicated machine which we call comfort, combine and force the

hands of the authorities? A cracker under the tail of the controller of telephones is indicated.

And then there is the postal service. At Nice the chief post-office is in the part of the town in which it must have been placed in Smollett's time when the present fashionable town was not thought of; in Monte Carlo it is at the top of the hill leading down to the Condamine. A poky little building, not half large enough for the work of the high season, not large enough for the lesser work of August. Understaffed too. The actual staff is unusually efficient and good-tempered, but it has no divine power. To send a telegram, to get a letter from the poste-restante, to send a registered letter, is so wearisome a process that visitors must often return to the North in disgust. And one can make other complaints. Why, in the name of wonder, should it take a clear day, and sometimes nearer two, for a letter to go from Villefranche to Monte Carlo, or from Beaulieu to Cannes? The service is so bad that, the telephone service being inefficient, one is often forced to send a messenger, a *chasseur* — there are *chasseurs*, messengers, attached to every hotel and every restaurant — or a telegram (and the telegrams are not very swift). No, the whole local service wants reorganization. There is talk of installing the post-office in the present Sporting Club building when the Club moves elsewhere. It sounds unlikely. The building belongs to Blanc's daughter, Princesse Radziwill, and you can be sure that the Administration has been paying the deuce of a rent for its use. I do not see the Monégasque postal authorities paying anything out of the way for a service so unremunerative — when compared, that is, with the operations of tables of roulette, trente-et-quarante and baccarat. If, as

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one supposes, the postal service is a partnership between France and Monaco, then it is even more unlikely that the landlord would get a great price. France has its own financial difficulties. Monte Carlo in that respect is not alone. Oh, and while I am about it, let me voice a constant demand – for a second and serious post-office in the neighbourhood of the Catholic Church. There is a small post-office in the Atrium. Caution: Register letters of importance!

As for the postal service to and from England, it is not at all bad – but a very little intelligence and energy would make it very much better. In the first place, it is extraordinarily irritating at Monte Carlo and at Menton to have to wait for the morning delivery until, say, ten o'clock. At Nice the delivery is earlier, but not much so. At least in the season, why should not the mail, which at present travels presumably by the 7 a.m. slow train from Paris, come instead by the 9 a.m. *rapide*, which in that case should run on to Menton instead of lingering for the three-hour later arrival of the 7 a.m. so-called 'express' at Marseilles? It would be worth it, even though it might a little complicate the question of the mails for the Riviera from Spain and South Eastern France. So would letters arrive in the rooms of visitors to the Eastern Riviera in time to be attended to and answered without ruining all the fine morning hours. Examine the time-table and you will see what I mean. Another thing: why should not our benefactor, Lord Dalziel of Wooler, arrange with the English and French postal authorities that letters with a surtax of, say, a shilling, in England could be posted at Victoria itself in a special box up to 10.40 in the morning for conveyance by the Blue Train, and with a surtax of

five francs at the Gare de Lyon in Paris? Arrangements equally satisfactory could be contrived for the return journey. Of course, the delivery of the letters on their arrival in the South would have to be provided for in some way. They might perhaps be called for at the various Wagon-Lits agencies. Many business men and many fond lovers would call down blessings on the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits if such an idea could be carried through. And it certainly could. Under such a scheme your financier could get his letter of information and his papers to sign from Throgmorton Street at mid-day on the morning after it was written and his reply could be in London on the following evening at seven o'clock. . . .

What chance is there of Monte Carlo regaining its old ascendancy? Not a very great deal, I fancy, unless Monsieur René Léon or his successor shows a Cornuché genius for entertainment and organization. You see, women in particular have taken so very kindly to baccarat and chemin-de-fer that they no longer feel that they must stop at 'Monte' – as they will insist on miscalling it – for roulette and trente-et-quarante. Go there from Cannes occasionally for these games – yes. Stop there – not necessary. As I have explained, it is an easy matter to move about on all this coast. You can leave Cannes by train at 11.8 a.m. and be in the Principality in good time for a flutter – as it is termed – before lunch. And you can return by a train at five in an hour and a half – in plenty of time to dress for dinner. Perhaps you would like to go over to Monte Carlo, dressed, to dine. Then there is a train from Cannes at 6.40 p.m. and you can return by a quickish train a quarter of an hour after

midnight. (By the way, one of your first jobs on reaching the P.L.M. system should be to buy for 2 frs. 65 cs. the small 'Indicateur Chaix' of the P.L.M. line. The numbered indications in the centre map are not to pages but to tables. Thus the stations from Marseilles to Ventimiglia are in the issue now before me on page 98 and in table 48. Observe very carefully the indications at the head of each column. A black diamond is a sign that from your point of view there may be a 'catch' about the train: you may only be allowed to travel by it if you are going a certain distance, possibly as much as five hundred kilometres; fortunately it is a 'catch' very seldom operative in the case of trains going towards Italy. Make certain, too, that the train you are proposing to take is not a *luxe*. To be sure, you can travel in it for the shortest distance, but the supplement is likely to amount to something like ten shillings.)

Well, Cannes and Nice, Monte Carlo and Juan-les-Pins, Menton and Beaulieu, being as close together as all that, people, especially what are known as 'smart people', show an increasing disposition to live anywhere rather than in the Principality. Chemin-de-fer is queen nowadays, and it is to be played with great vigour at the Casino which they are building at Beaulieu, and at the new Casino on the Promenade des Anglais at Nice. They boasted to me the other day at Juan-les-Pins of the great players they were expecting in the winter and of the large banks that would be put up. All this in spite of the fact that at baccarat and 'chemmy' – I may as well outrage my every instinct and give way to slang once more! – the bank exacts, through the unfaltering *cagnotte*, a very much higher percentage than it ever attempts to do at the games peculiar to Monte Carlo.

Now, possibly with great inaccuracy, Monsieur René Léon, Monsieur Camille Blanc's successor – Camille died in December, 1927; he also should have his monument in the Principality – is credited with the inauguration and the pushing home of the policy of making Monte Carlo safe for democracy. To him is attributed – perhaps with injustice – all the little fresh regulations that vex the soul of the old habitué: the charging of admission to the Rooms, the charging of a cloak-room fee and so on, and, even if he is not responsible for the comparatively recent innovation by which, so to speak, the croupiers have to look to the public, through the 'box', for their support rather than to the Casino, their employer, his critics declare that he busied himself in the furtherance of a programme of which that horrid imposition was but the beginning. He it was, they say, who proposed to have rows of shops up each side of the Avenue des Boulegrins (it is amusing to remember that the word *boulegrin* is a corruption of bowling-green), but I do not believe it. Surely he more than most people must have realized that too many of Monte Carlo's amenities have been sacrificed to the rage for building, for building new shops, new kiosks, new hotels. Why, if you could compare a detailed map of the Monte Carlo part of the Principality in, say, 1899 with one showing what it is now, you would be astonished. The gardens between the Casino and the Café de Paris used to slope down, naturally and pleasantly, from the Place to the Hotel Mirabeau. Then suddenly it seemed necessary to those in authority to tunnel and cave under them, to raise them to a flat level, as far at least as the part in front of the Café was concerned. To what end? To provide cloak-rooms and

so on for the staff, and, incidentally, I suppose, to give more room for the tables of the Café. I am told – I do not know with how much truth – that these same gardens, the Café and its tables occupy land which is not the actual property of the Casino, that there exists an exigent landlord. Perhaps it was he, if the story is true, who sat on the project of doing away with the Café, or with a great part of it, and building a new ‘Sporting’ in that part of the gardens in which the pigeon-house now stands. As it is, little bits are chiselled off the gardens and terraces every year. A new building has been raised on the Terrasse near the Thermal Establishment, and on the higher terrace, doing something to spoil the view over toward Monaco, a kiosk-lift has been built to take the old and infirm down to and up from the level of the Baths – a desirable provision, perhaps, but a defect in the landscape all the same. Of the harm that will be done to the picturesque qualities of the place by the new boulevard that is planned to run round the coast to La Vigie I have already written, and of the pity of the continuation of the Avenue des Fleurs. . . . No, if Monte Carlo is to regain its ascendancy it must reverse its policy. The authorities must look into details: they must do away with the crowds of waiting motor-omnibuses which at present make an unhappy, un placid place of the old calm ‘Camembert’; they must exact a return to the old regulations which forbade motor-cars speeding round its circle – a woman was run over there only a few months ago – and which prohibited the passage of tradesmen’s carts and porters; they must improve the postal and telephone services; they must frown upon the imposition of fresh fees; they must try to ensure that in the hotels



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the client gets what he orders and pays for — there is a great deal of substitution going on in the Principality, a great deal of 'passing off'; they must insist that if the client pays a high price he gets a fine article, whether it be a chicken, a glass of curaçoa, or a cup of tea. . . . The taking over of the Hermitage is an accomplished fact. Let the Hermitage be as good in every respect as an hotel can be. Let it have everything of the best. Let it have the same pride in its cellar as the Hotel de Paris used to have, before the raids of Pierpont Morgan the Second and before the War. Nothing should be too small for the Administration's notice. Why does the Casino descend to the meanness of 'pinching' the rate of exchange if you are so foolish as to want to

change foreign money in the Casino? All in good time let the pavements and the roads be repaired. Cannot the garage facing the Galerie Charles III be tidied up and cannot Mr. Lewis be induced to open that shop now closed which he occupied for so many decades? Small matters, but indicative of slacknesses that have spread like a miasma over a place which once was as clean and tidy as a new pin. Why, in 1927, I encountered unhappy poverty, even beggars, within a quarter of a mile of the Casino itself. Recently a concert was given at the Beausoleil Casino for the benefit of the poor of Moneghetti. Moneghetti is in Monaco! Does not François Blanc turn in his grave when he hears of such things? Did they not embitter the last months of Camille, his son?

And then again, why not 'tell the world' more about the advantages and qualities of the Etablissement des Bains? The advertisements of Monte Carlo that have appeared in England have always been old-fashioned and conventional. Display type that told no story. Explain what the baths can do for the invalid; how you can take almost any waters within the walls of the building; that you can act as if you were at Vichy, say, or Carlsbad; how you can subject yourself to any treatment.

Monte Carlo has so many attractions – and so little is made of them.

Some people want a first-class music-hall at Monte Carlo. Why not? It could be made to pay, surely. The little theatre at Beausoleil has a varied programme of plays, of revues, in fact of anything that comes along the coast, but it wants encouragement. One of my own pet projects is a short season of English actors and actresses, a good company in some of the plays which

even foreigners would like to see. Shakespeare without too much scenery; Shaw; Galsworthy; Maugham; Noel Coward; Lonsdale. It is not enough to produce 'Outward Bound' in a translation! Paris has shown that there is a public in France for English plays. Mr. Frank Stirling and Mr. Frank Reynolds with their English Players have had a success which they might easily improve upon in the Principality. I understand that Monsieur René Blum (who has already shown an unusual interest in the new writer and in the fresh experiment) is likely to make an adventure in that direction in 1929. And think what *réclame* would come to the place if there was a fortnight's season of Gilbert and Sullivan. All these things could be done. Indeed, when I think what could be achieved if the recent financial stringency has no similar sequel, I cannot help allowing fantasy to run away with me: Years ago there was a story in the papers that large capitalists were promoting a tube between Nice and Monte Carlo. Through all that rock! So likely! But it would not, even to-day, be impossible to do away with the open railway between the Condamine and, say, a spot about half-way to Larvotto. The line could plunge into a tunnel and come out again, a quarter of a mile east of the present station. The new station itself could be underground, a vast hall, from which escalators would bring passengers and luggage to a comparatively small surface building. The experience of the underground Piccadilly Circus could be used. In such case the gardens would run down from the Casino to the sea. The ancient beauty of the promontory on which Monte Carlo stands could be revived. I can see only one possible disadvantage. Rock vibration from

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the passing trains might disturb the good red wines in the cellars of the Hermitage, the Paris and the Metro-pole – if there are any good red wines left.

Oh, and by the way, cannot all the hotels in the Principality and on the Riviera generally be induced to take a leaf out of the books of the best American hotels and those of London and Paris, and banish once and for all the unfrosted electric-light bulbs from their bedrooms, their public rooms, and their banqueting halls? Why should one's eyesight be impaired as a result of spending a few months of the winter in a pleasanter climate than the North can afford? It is too high a price to pay.

I have been moderate in my ideas. You will notice that I have not suggested the blowing away of the bulk of the Tête de Chien so that Monte Carlo's day of sunshine may be lengthened. That can be held in abeyance for the next decade!

Yes, I repeat. Whoever may have the directing say at Monte Carlo at the time this book comes out should think seriously of the Principality's position. One cannot pretend that its chief source of income is not the green table, and yet it has allowed the great gamblers to be tempted to Cannes, and now, perhaps, it is going to let San Remo – San Remo, that little town over the frontier! – capture many of the moderate players. The Administration promises a second golf course, but not all of us play golf. Where is that golf course to be, by the way? At the base of Cap Martin?

MENTON

MENTON is a pleasant place to live in, a delightful place to which to make a day's excursion, a very haven of rest for the nerves. But it is rather invalidish and just a little dull. As be its position as the last town on the coast, the last collection of houses indeed, until one reaches the Italian frontier just a kilometre or two beyond the centre of the town, it has an air far more Italian than any other town we have yet seen down here. If one day when you are stopping at Monte Carlo you are walking or driving to Cap Martin or are taking the longer route to La Turbie, press on about half a mile beyond the turning to the Cap, or a few yards beyond the point where you leave the Route d'Italie and have to turn sharply round to the left to mount by Roquebrune to the town which Augustus chose for his trophy, and you will have a very beautiful, romantic and intimate view of Menton and its bay. This is surely one of the most beautiful of all views. . . . Cap Martin is a cape from which, if you are at Monte Carlo and look eastward, you cannot escape. A low tree-clad promontory, it brings into the landscape a new note. It is green; it has but a fringe of rock; it is studded with villas and at its end is the Cap Martin Hotel, rather English and in spacious wooded grounds. It has beautiful views. Indeed, all its rooms have a view either over the sea or towards the hills and mountains of the mainland, views these last of an almost postcard prettiness, certainly views that are at first sight rather of the theatre than of the solid everyday world. I knew a novelist who would

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have none of this hotel just because its views were so unbelievable. Cap Martin is so near to Monte Carlo that it is a nothing to run into the Casino by the hotel motor-omnibus; there is, too, the tramcar which will take you into Menton or into Monte Carlo for a few pence. I have stayed often at the Cap and have liked it in spite of its rather ponderous and very English furniture, but I remember revolting in my mind against the fact that the Restaurant was rather dark and not very airy. The hotel architects of forty, fifty years ago, were such chumps! However, they may have improved away these defects since the War, during which the hotel served as a convalescent home for English officers. At the actual point is a tea pavilion, belonging to the same people, which makes a pleasant short afternoon excursion from Monte Carlo; and one can, or could, walk right round the point, keeping just above the rocks, from Menton to lower Roquebrune, if one does not mind a little trespassing. That walk should bring you up, over the mouth of a tunnel, to just below the Riva Bella Hotel, which, like the view-point I wrote of just now, is on the neck of the promontory and so beautifully placed that when I stay there I do not know whether to choose a room looking to the east, where I see Menton and the Italian shore, or to the west, where La Turbie and the Tête de Chien look down on Monaco. Americans with an interest in their own writers may care to know that the author of *An American Tragedy* had the room at the corner on the second floor on the westward side. It was there that Theodore Dreiser and Sir Hugh Lane used endlessly to dispute. The view of Monaco from the Riva Bella or from any point near by, as night falls and the Principality

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puts on its necklace of silver lights, is lovely beyond compare.

It is a goodish road which runs from the Cap Martin Hotel into Menton. The hotel garage is a large one and if you have your car with you you will find that to reach the Italianate town will take you but a very few minutes, although ere you reach its actual streets your car is forced by the town's rules to turn inland and proceed by the less picturesque route. But before that, before it leaves the Cap, you will find you are looking over the sea at a different but still a beautiful Menton through the branches of olive trees that grow on the edge of the water. French artists have painted those trees and that view; Mr. Gerald Festus Kelly has done several versions which I covet.

The Menton Promenade du Midi, on which you will walk directly, is the least interesting part of the town. It is modern in the same way that the Promenade des Anglais at Nice is modern. The real interest of the town begins with the Marché Couvert and the Jetée and the serried rows of houses which the harbour wall protects. Do not fail to walk all the way out to the lighthouse at the end of that harbour. Yes, a view! One looks at the old town, at the houses which Mr. Maresco Pearce has pictured so skilfully in his water-colours and which mount one above another with such exquisite if battered dignity, till one's eye reaches the Church and those sun-flooded cemeteries which hold so many of the English dead. Menton has belonged to Italy and it has belonged to Monaco – indeed, the Principality included Menton until the middle of the last century, just as it did Roquebrune; Menton has even been a Republic. These changes

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may account for the fact that it has never been modernized. See some of the arcaded and archwayed streets in the old town, the narrow streets that run from the rue St. Michel with its old palaces of the Princes of Monaco and you will understand what I mean, and you will share my amazement at a sentence in Baring-Gould's book: 'There is little of architectural interest in Mentone.' The church is of a bad period, true, but —. The novelist and historian was no happier when he wrote of the 'very dashing, frivolous, up-to-date modern town'. Menton was never dashing or frivolous. It would lose its charm if it were. True, it has a pleasant Casino where you can play boule and baccarat — of the lighter kind. I remember a very rich old gentleman, weary of the 'Sporting' at Monte Carlo, taking his swollen pocket-book to Menton and returning after a few hours convinced that he had brought away all that the small gambling set among its visitors possessed. Menton, in fact, is a safe and sober town. Germans are returning to it. One of its chief attractions is maritime — the ships, Mediterranean-rigged, in its harbour. In that respect it is like St. Jean. By the way, if you are staying at Menton, read *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion*. It recounts one of the most exciting escapes in literature, the escape over the frontier into Italy of an American soldier of the Foreign Legion.

Hotels? Yes, Menton has goodish hotels. Cheaper, naturally, than at Nice or Monte Carlo. Most of the old ones, the Westminster, the Savoy, the Balmoral and so on, line the Promenade du Midi, but there is a further group of much the same period in the second bay, beyond the harbour, in Garavan in fact, Garavan which sheltered near its station in an amazing series of villas in

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an amazing garden, that amazing novelist, Señor Blasco Ibañez. One of the Garavan hotels, the Hotel des Anglais, is kept by an Englishman, Mr. J. L. Churchman, till recently the British vice-consul. This group, while very near the sea, stands well above the road with an uninterrupted view. Then there are hotels, of which the Mont-Fleuri is an example, on the higher ground behind the Menton station. Still higher, in gardens, are two



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'palace' hotels, the Winter Palace and the Riviera Palace. I have acquaintance with one of them only, the first, and as that acquaintance was confined to a lunch at which I ate but cold lobster, I cannot say much about it. Indeed, for the world which spends a good deal of its time thinking of the pleasures of the table, there is, as far as I know, only

one place at which to eat seriously in Menton — and that is in Garavan: the Amiraute, to the gardens of which one ascends by a lift from the Quai Laurenti. Oh, they cook very well at the Amiraute, very well indeed! Order beforehand, though. I lunched there once with Monsieur Albertazzi who came over with me from the Riviera Palace at Monte Carlo. Few people know what is good as well as he! I have lunched there often. It is very expensive. *Hors-d'œuvres*; regional cookery; real American bar in the

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garden, which of course the true gourmet will ignore. Below the Amiraute is the Pergola, on a jetty over the sea. Italian. Good of its kind. Very agreeable if you secure a table on the balcony. One bathes beneath the Pergola in the warmer months. Everywhere at Menton the bathing is distinctly pleasant, which is more, I think, than can be said for the bathing at Cap Martin, where, moreover, the hotel is closed in the summer. Waves beat incessantly on the Cap. It is not protected, as is Cap d'Antibes by the Iles des Lérins. Moreover, a myriad years of waves have not succeeded in reducing the sharpness of the Cap Martin rocks.

There is a lawn-tennis club at Menton; you can play croquet; there is open-air music; there are battles of flowers (at one of which an old gentleman, a friend of mine, was relieved of his pocket-book containing his return ticket to London and all his money); there are regattas; there is an Anglo-American Club at which, when you are elected, you can read the papers and play bridge. Also there is an American horse show and a *concours hippique* not far off, at the base of Cap Martin; and, very important indeed, Sospel with its golf-links is not very far off. Not that the attraction of Sospel is confined to its golf. Whatever else you may miss in the way of motor drives, do not miss that by a comparatively new road from Sospel to Nice. You need not go as far as Nice: you can turn at Trinité-Victor and come east by way of Laghet.

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HOOD OF NICE, MONTE CARLO
AND MENTON

IN theory there are, no doubt, several recondite reasons which militate against the chances of success of a book which the author greatly enjoys writing. Man is a curious animal and his best work is done not with pleasure and laughter but with sweat and tears. One very certain disadvantage there is: one gets toward the end of the number of pages which one has allotted oneself long before one has exhausted all that one wants to say. Take this poor book, for instance. I have in effect been writing it for years and years – and I dare say I shall not cease to want to write in it till I die. I find myself wanting to add and add and add. New information comes to me; I have new experiences. When I wrote the chapter on the best roads by which to motor to the Riviera my first-hand knowledge of the matter was slight. Then, suddenly, by some series of coincidences, I had several chances of motoring, on one route or another, and I dare say I have collected as much personal knowledge as most travellers, the exceptions including, of course, Lord Montagu and Mr. John Prioleau. In the sequel I had to re-write most of the chapter – twice! I shall, no doubt, re-write it again in proof. Much the same has happened with other chapters. And the result of all this is that I have very much less room for this chapter on excursions in the neighbourhood of Nice, Monte Carlo and Menton than I had hoped.

Peira Cava, for instance. You go from the sunshine of

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this eastern littoral to the snow of Peira Cava in a very few hours. You leave a sea-front on which yesterday you sat in the open air at midday and drank iced lemonade, and here to-day you are making your first acquaintance with winter sports. I have a middle-aged prejudice myself against winter sports; I feel that I am quite content that my acquaintance with them should be confined to what I can see in this corner of the Alpes Maritimes. The Coast of Pleasure, if occasionally artificial, is generally very human; winter sports at St. Moritz, Wangen and so on must be inhuman. There are so many rules and conventions to observe – and Switzerland is not nearly so pleasant a place (nor so cheap) as Savoy. Moreover, on Victoria platform, and, later, on the Channel boats, the people who are going to the winter sports are not nearly as attractive in appearance as those who are bound for the distractions of the South. They know how to cook in Provence. Its visitors know how to be lazy. On the Coast of Pleasure they do not give you inferior honey for breakfast. But I digress. If I had space I would tell you how jolly it is to go up from Nice to Peira Cava and to wear yourself out on its snowy slopes. You can skate, ski, luge, and bobsleigh – if those are the right words – to your heart's content. It is unlikely that you have brought South suitable clothes for so unexpected an excursion, but you can improvise them or your friends will lend you what is absolutely necessary! Make inquiry of Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son, and you will learn all about it – the cost and all else that it is essential that you should know. Club together with a few energetic souls and you can hire a motor-coach all to yourselves and proceed into the hills with comfort. And you can stop a night or half

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a dozen. You can go there and back in a day. It is not an expensive matter. And it will make practically no difference to the expense whether you go from Nice or the more eastern towns. You can travel in a public charabanc if you are only a small party. Take the necessary steps to make sure that whoever else may find the hotels full, the tables all engaged, and the supplies of food exhausted, it shall not be you.

Now let me tell you of an excursion from Monte Carlo which few visitors to the Principality make and which will require three or four hours at the outside. In all the Riviera it is my favourite. During the War, when Nice, Cannes and Monte Carlo were rest camps for the American soldier, I used to run across man after man, in the train, in the street, who, after the first day or two of rest and sunshine, was bored stiff as the result of his ignorance of any way of spending his time or of any place to go to. I met three of them one day in the eastward train from Nice. They were talking frankly among themselves. The first day, they said, was jolly, and so was the second, but on the third, yesterday, they had found it impossible to fill up their time. They were going to Ventimiglia to buy picture postcards which they designed to write to the old folks at home and to drop into an Italian letter-box – and they seemed to think poorly of that as an amusement. I was not surprised. I wondered then why the Y.M.C.A., or some kindred organization, had not prepared a little guide-book to tell them, without humbug, what to do with their time. Anyhow, my particular trio was fed to the teeth. Better the labour and mud of the Champagne front than the dullness of these so-called resorts of pleasure.

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They had money to spend, but they hadn't the slightest idea how to spend it. Naturally. I should not have myself in like circumstances. We got into conversation, these three, my wife and I, and before the train had reached Monaco I had suggested that if they liked they could join us in an excursion, a short excursion, into the mountains. But that, I made clear, would knock on the head any idea of posting cards in Italy, for they would have to leave the train at Monte Carlo. A whispered conversation – and then consent. But – but might they bring along a friend who was in another compartment? Of course; the more the merrier. We got out at Monte Carlo and we climbed through the Casino gardens and I told them all about the Casino itself – of course, being in uniform they had never been allowed to cross its threshold – and one of them vastly delighted me by saying that the place was exactly like the description he had read in a book from the ship's library coming over, for the book, I found on inquiry, was *Caviare*. We went up through the gardens by the Avenue des Boulegrins, just as I should advise you to do if you have not a car, and we reached the station of the funicular railway just in time to catch the 11.45 train. (It will be better if you catch the 10.10.) We travelled second class because it was cheaper, but also because in the second class – especially if you secure the seats on the front platform of the first coach, all among the market baskets – you have so much finer a view both of the place you have left and the place to which you are bound.

Twenty minutes of climbing and we were in La Turbie, the little town built largely of the stone and marble out of which, nearly two thousand years ago, Augustus built the trophy, the monument, the tower, with which he com-

memorated his victory over all the Ligurian tribes. One account has it that long before Augustus the Phœnicians built on this site a temple to Melkart, their Hercules. It is certain that they used the Port of Hercules below.

In time the natives of La Turbie wanted stone with which to build their church: they took it from the Augustan Trophy. The process continued. The Grimaldis are said to have brought down from La Turbie the stone that was necessary for the building of the church which used to stand on the site of the present Cathedral. Naturally, very little of the Trophy is now left, but the French Government will have no more harm done and, gradually, from here and there it has assembled some of the old material and one can now gain a faint idea of what the monument must have looked like in the first years of our era. Our Americans, one of whom was a school-teacher somewhere in Indiana, were vastly interested in the Trophy and in the old streets with their pointed gateways, but to begin with I showed them the view toward Italy from the terrace just by the station. . . . Then a walk of a mile and a half, first towards Nice by the Higher Corniche and (half a mile, say, from the station) down to the right into a valley in which, if you are lucky, you will hear the Chasseurs Alpains at practice, bugle calling to bugle. In a little while we came to the spot from which you first see the Church and Monastery of Notre Dame de Laghet, and my Americans drew in their breath in pleasure and surprise. They had seen nothing like that at Nice or in the other places to which their fellows had directed them. And in truth that first view of Laghet is happy and surprising. We saw the naïve and extraordinary votive pictures in the corridors of the Monastery

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— for Notre Dame de Laghet is one of the great saints of this sea-board; she is credited with many miracles; she draws many pilgrims to her shrine -- and we saw the cave that sheltered a statue of the saint, a cave so neglected, owing to the carelessness of the aged curé, that the iron grille was never closed, the statue itself thrown down and broken, and old sardine boxes more in evidence than objects of piety. The few inhabitants of Laghet are, however, pleasant and plausible souls. One man combines in his person the offices of mayor, sacristan and inn-keeper — and he keeps an inn, the Hotel de la Madone, where you can stop for a very small sum and eat and drink quite reasonably well. We lunched with our Americans, however, not at the inn which gives on to the little Place, but up the stone stairs to the left, where a dear old lady will do what she can for you in the way of food and wine. (She will do better if you give her, in French, at least a day's notice of your coming: Madame Mallet, Laghet, près La Turbie, A/M.) The peace, the lovely simplicity, of Laghet after the restlessness of Monte Carlo is infinitely grateful.

Two other things before we leave Laghet: If you go up by the 10.10 train and lunch at once on arrival, you will have time to walk and clamber over the hill to Peillon, a hill-top village which is very well worth seeing. You will hardly find the way without some guidance. The path is among rocks and constantly loses itself. However, you need take your guide no farther than the first mile. You can return from Peillon to La Turbie by another route — over the flank of Mont Agel. A very fine walk. Should you choose, you can go from Laghet into Nice by diligence-motor, taking the road which follows the valley

down into the greater valley of the Paillon river. You can even walk till you come to the tramway at Trinité-Victor. The monks at Laghet used, before the expulsion, to make a very pleasant Chartreuse-like liqueur. Do not let anyone deceive you into believing that even a glass of it remains.

Of course, if you have a car at your disposal, and if you have started at a reasonably early hour, a visit to Laghet is so small a matter that you will have reached it from either Monte Carlo or Nice or Menton so soon that you will hardly need lunch for a while and will be anxious to make other use of your time. I suggest Eze, Eze in the hills. This hill-top fortress-village is one of the wonders of the world – even to-day when it is largely fallen into ruin. To reach it from Laghet you go back up the valley down which you came until you find yourself in the Higher Corniche at a spot where a whisky advertisement, an obscene old gentleman who has lived too long and who has on me the effect of making me feel that all other whiskies are far, far better, is a blot on the fair Provençal landscape. Please, please, dear Mr. Simon, do take it down! At this point you turn sharp to the right and proceed along the Corniche as if you were going to Nice. In a quarter of a mile or so a lesser road goes off downhill to the right, but in much the same direction. Follow it through the forest. You will see to your left as you go the lovely *bastide* that Madame Balsan has built, the most beautiful new house, I fancy, on all this coast, and the most beautifully situated. Then, in front of you, is Eze.

Baring-Gould 'heard a gentleman who had spent several winters on the Côte d'Azur remark that "after a while one gets very sick of the Riviera". I promptly

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inquired whether he had penetrated any of the ravines sawn in the limestone; whether he had visited the mountain villages, such as Thouet de Bœuil [a misprint for Touët-de-Beuil, a strange cliff-town, to which you can go from Nice by a train at 11.45; I must go too]; whether he had explored the Estérel. No – he knew nothing of them. In fact, through a dozen winters he had seen nought save the vulgar side of Provence.’ While protesting against the phrase ‘the vulgar side of Provence’ as a description of a scene which no doubt consisted of the town life of the Riviera from Cannes to Menton and such human spectacles as the ‘Sporting’ at Monte Carlo and the Réserve at Beaulieu, I could from my own experience equal a dozen times the example that the reverend historian produced. To get to Touët one has to take a long and uncomfortable railway journey or to afford a car; to get to Laghet or Eze one has need only of a stout pair of legs. But I know dozens of Monte Carlo habitués who have seen neither place and, not seeing them, have missed memories which they would carry to their graves. You should read about Eze before going to it in Sir Frederick Treves’s book. Then you will know what to look for and you will be able to get your fill of interest out of its narrow and cut-throat alleys and its amazing precipice site. Here I need only say that it is to my mind the most surprising example of the Provençal hill-top town. Mr. Prioleau seems to think so too; one of his best passages is devoted to its reconstruction in words. The necessity for building against Saracen raids dictated its position. Until comparatively recent times no road led to it. It had no wells within its walls. Its gateways are among the most amazing things about it. In those old days it was a place impossible to

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take by mere force of arms. Barbarossa knew that and only succeeded in capturing it by treachery. 'When the pirate left it it was a black, smouldering ruin, empty and helpless, stripped of all that it possessed and occupied only by the dead, by such wounded as survived and by the few who, hidden in vaults and secret places, had escaped death from suffocation. There was no need to leave a guard in the town for there was nothing to guard. Eze, as a stronghold, had ceased to exist.' So Sir Frederick, who handled a pen almost as well as he did a knife. Here follows the vivid touch of the man who knows: 'It is always customary to say, in the account of scenes like this, that "the streets ran with blood"', but it is not so. The state is far more hideous, since blood clots so soon that it will not run.'

Do not be content with regarding the gateway of Eze and then passing on. The way is steep, but it is worth taking even up to what remains of the old Castle. A little that is modern is now within the walls. Mr. Barlow, the American composer, has bought and gutted several houses on the seaward side and, preserving with some skill their essential character, has made himself a villa in which to live. An eyrie looking over towards Africa. The Crown Prince of Sweden is, as I write, in process of following his example, but his architectural methods are less satisfactory, for they are less in keeping with the place.

Although it is not an unpleasing addition to the town silhouette, the Church of Eze can be ignored as far as a visit to its interior is concerned; it stands on the site of what was once a church of some architectural beauty and importance. It is cheering news that Colonel Balsan has obtained permission to pull it down and to build on the

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site a church on the old pattern. Pray God that he has an architect as reverent as he is sure to be skilful.

When you have finished with Eze you can lunch below quite pleasantly at the little restaurants which stand on the sea side of the high road. If you have come to Eze on foot you may, if you have strength and are not afraid of mountain paths, go down from Eze to the little bay in which Eze-les-Pins nestles, by the self-same path, very little improved, which Barbarossa's men used when they climbed up to find that treachery had succeeded in opening the gateway of the fortress-town for them. It was on this pathway, too, that, fourteen hundred years ago, the monks of St. Hospice were set upon by robbers or infidels and killed. No longer, however, do you require arms, but you do require good boots. I have taken that headlong pathway several times, always with delight, but always with horrid results to my footgear. Mine has been distinguished company. Once, Miss Ella Hepworth Dixon too courageously essayed it in ordinary shoes; she lost a heel before she had gone far, for the pathway, always hard to follow, is an affair of stones and bushes. Another time, with Sir Hugh Lane and Mr. Theodore Dreiser. Indeed you should read Mr. Dreiser's account of Eze and the descent. His shoes suffered too. Later with the author of *A Shropshire Lad*. This is what Mr. Dreiser says:

'We passed shepherds tending sheep on sharp slopes, a donkey-driver making his way upward with three donkeys all heavily laden, an umbrella-tree sheltering a peasant so ancient that he must have endured from Grecian days, and olive groves whose shadows were as

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rich as that bronze which time has favored with its patina. It seemed impossible that half-way between Monte Carlo and Nice – those twin worlds of spend-thrift fashion and pampered vice – should endure a scene so idyllic. The Vale of Arcady is here; all that art could suggest or fancy desire, a world of simple things.'

The last time I took that walk was not with the Americans we guided to Laghet but with another band of American soldiers equally delighted to find themselves out of the beaten track. My! when the War was over and they had saved a little money they were sure going to bring some of the folks over to see Eze and to experience the astonishing beauty of this descent. We came after a while to the road which winds round the shore, the Lower Corniche, and in a few minutes arrived a timely tramcar to take us all into Nice. During the War one could hardly hope for the arrival of a train, but the station of Eze is also at the foot of the track, and in these more normal days the railway keeps very good time – which it may very well do, considering how long even its expresses take to crawl from Marseilles to Ventimiglia.

You, however, are as likely to have gone to Eze by car. In that case you can push on by the Middle Corniche toward Nice and examine that curious and interesting place, Olivula, which, before this new road was completed in 1921, was hardly known and was indeed almost inaccessible. Olivula is, it appears, a riddle to archæologists. The original theory is that it is an offshoot from a town which, until it was sacked by the Saracens, stood on the shore near where Villefranche stands now. It was supposed that such of the inhabitants as escaped massacre or

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capture fled to the hills and built in the course of time a fortress-village on the height which overlooked their old home. Olivula is separated from the shore by some thousand feet of precipice. Mr. H. Villiers-Barnett, however, a journalist more than a journalist, came to suspect that easy theory, and, as the result of his own researches, concluded that the place was Phœnician in origin. The Abbé Cardon, working on the site with his own hands, discovered so many evidences of civilizations much earlier than the ninth century, coins and so on of Greek, Roman and Carthaginian origin, with neolithic stone weapons and implements, that it is now impossible to say how far back the history of Olivula may not go. 'The whole hill summit, wherever it is scratched,' as the Special Correspondent of *The Times* (Jan. 12, 1921) wrote after going carefully into the question, 'is found to be covered with the walls or foundations of old buildings, so that it was once all a closely huddled mass, showing types of masonry going back to something earlier than Roman. . . . One man grubbing single-handed cannot do much, even in fourteen years, toward the excavation of a mountain-top which was once a densely built area. The Abbé Cardon has shown prodigious industry and has worked marvels, but what he has discovered can be only a small fraction of what the extraordinary mass of old ruined buildings must contain. It is enough, at least, to open a problem which is bewildering enough. What are the ruins? What does the amazing chronological hotch-potch mean?'

I have seen the place myself; certainly it is extraordinary; certainly also, as the *Times* correspondent says, even though you are no archæologist and do not care for ruins,

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'having once seen it, you will never forget the view from Olivula'. It was close by, according to tradition, that Napoleon stood when he made the exclamation, 'Quel bel luogol' which was, we are told, the origin of the name of Beaulieu.

The French Riviera may not have a great deal of architecture interesting to the student of beauty, but it has much besides Olivula which is interesting to the student of archæology. Press on from Menton beyond Garavan and you come very quickly to the Rochers Rouges, a little excursion on which you will do well to take your passport, for the Rochers are beyond the torrent spanned by the Pont St. Louis over which runs the main road into Italy, and which marks the frontier between the two countries. The showing of a passport, however, is no more than a formality, for, unless by boat, there is no way of penetrating farther along the shore than the Rochers, for at that point the precipices bring any kind of path abruptly to an end. According to Baring-Gould, it was not so in Roman times, for he says that the Via Aurelia ran along the shore. Why it should have come down to the shore from the much higher ground which is now the garden of La Mortola, I find it difficult to imagine. The little cluster of buildings, the approach to which is barred for a minute by Italian soldiers, has had an interest more immediate than that of archæology to the Mentonais. Until the Duce put down a few years ago and for the time being public gambling in Italy, there was a Casino at the Rochers Rouges in which roulette was played and trente-et-quarante; and there was, moreover, a quite promising restaurant where one got, and

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perhaps may still get (although the closing of the tables may have cramped its style), very good langoustes. Altogether the Italians were taking, or trying to take, good money out of the pockets of Menton's visitors. So the Mentonais, encouraged, for all I know to the contrary, by the authorities of that other Casino three or four miles away, where they no doubt feel they ought to have a monopoly, dug trenches across the road so that neither carriage nor motor-car could proceed. . . . But Italians offer gambling, even roulette, to-day at San Remo!

Just beyond the building which was the Casino and beyond the restaurant, is based the true fame of the Rochers Rouges – the caves in the limestone cliffs in which the mere layman will get a better idea of the habitation and method of life of primitive man than he is ever likely to get from museums, a score of monographs and a whole gallery of pictured reproductions. For in these caves are the skeletons of men, women and children, protected by glass, but otherwise left exactly as they were found by excavators, in their graves with their weapons and ornaments. When it was first discovered that there were human remains in these recesses the work of excavation was, one may surmise, carried out with little care and no great intelligence. The caves, it became clear, had been used by man, Cro-Magnon man of the Pleistocene Age, as human habitations; a deposit of thirty feet in depth covered the floor and from that deposit were taken household implements, weapons, the bones of wild animals – some of a type long vanished from the earth – ornaments, remains of fires. . . . The skulls of the human beings showed that they had possessed no scarcity of brain; their faces could not have been monkey-like; they

were of a great size. They date back to a time when there existed, where now is sea, a forest. There is a little museum by the caves in which another human skeleton is preserved and many other extraordinary relics of the past; other such remains are in the museum at Menton and that on the Rock of Monaco. If these remains interest you try to get hold of a copy – I wish I had one – of Ashton Hill-*yer's The Master-Girl*, a clever novel of that far-away period, which deserved a far greater success than it achieved.

If you have been staying a few days at Monte Carlo and have been caught up in its life, you will find it increasingly difficult to get away from the round which fashion dictates, and, perchance, you eat so much that any effective inclination to take exercise has left you. It is different, of course, if one has a motor-car at one's disposal, but I know that before the coming of the automobile it was almost impossible to get a certain type of person out of the Principality. A drive in one of those jolly little two-horse Victorias, which happily still exist, to Cap Martin or to Beaulieu, was about the limit of excursion. The cocktail habit had not then fixed its iron grasp on the world which thinks it amuses itself, but, coming down from one's room at, say, eleven o'clock, one used to stroll on the Terrace, gamble for a while, take an *apéritif* outside the Café and then go to lunch. A second visit to the Rooms filled up the afternoon. A few vigorous spirits would rise early and walk up by the mule path to La Turbie and back – there was no road in those days – and that certainly was the sort of exercise which would correct many excesses of diet. . . . Anyhow, nowadays, even a walk to the Rock of Monaco is a thing to be

considered and then to be postponed. That Palace across the harbour is, judged by the habits and prejudices of to-day, an excursion, so I will deal with it and its surroundings here. To come to Monte Carlo even for a couple of days and not to go up to Monaco is altogether unintelligent. The Palace itself, perhaps, has not very much to attract the visitor — I have never been inside it — but Monaco is a very pleasant, simple and tranquil town and such of its old fortifications as exist on the eastern and seaward side are very much worth having a closer view of than you can gain from the Casino Terrace. Architecturally of course the Cathedral is a monstrosity, but the Oceanographical Museum is better in its kind than anything else in the world; and the Prehistoric Museum, hard by, is unusually interesting, especially if you have recently seen the caves of the Rochers Rouges from which so many of the exhibits derive. There is one touching skeleton of a mother with her child on her arm. . . . And should you after walking round the Rock and visiting these two museums find that you are tired, you can always take the tramcar back to the Casino!

One of the amusing and interesting stories about the Rock of Monaco, its Castle and its rulers, is that of the Prince Louis who reigned from 1662 to 1701. His wife, Charlotte de Gramont, had not the habit of fidelity. Her lovers were numerous, and as soon as Louis heard from Paris, which she preferred as a place of residence to the wild hillside fortress which Monaco must then have been, of a new success, just as soon did he erect a separate gibbet on the frontiers of the Principality from which the happy man was hung in effigy. There were scores of such gibbets! Madame Sévigné tells the story.

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An 'excursion' in the same limited sense is that from Monte Carlo to Roquebrune, which, set on the mountain-side a little beyond La Vigie, you can see from the Terrace. A little huddle of houses until you come closer, Roquebrune is very easy to reach. I should recommend as the best route going up to La Turbie by train, and then walking by the Higher Corniche toward Menton till you find yourself actually under Roquebrune. There is a legend to the effect that the whole town, with the rocks on which it is built, slipped down in a night from a place much higher up. Be that as it may, its present position would certainly seem precarious. A castle dominates the town, which is of the Eze-like type. That castle, by the way, was bought before his death by Sir William Ingram, who built La Vigie, and presented to the authorities. It is in the process of careful restoration – and it did want it! You can eat well in the town, but you may be wanting to get back to Monte Carlo or to go on to Menton. Descend to the Corniche Road; you will find almost opposite the mule-path by which you came down a similar mule-path to take you to the lower road, along which the tramcar runs – in both directions. Read Sir Frederick Treves on Roquebrune – indeed, the more I read in *The Riviera of the Corniche Road* myself, the more I feel that every visitor to this part of the Riviera should have a copy of it.

An excursion which is of some distance is that to the Col di Tenda. You go by a road which crosses the Italian frontier several times, surprises you by its every turn, and shows you hill-top villages, precipices, ravines, a whole series of zigzag turns. Ultimately you arrive

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at Tenda, a little town in Italy where, if it is early in the spring, you will be very cold. Never mind! The inn-keeper, knowing that you have driven through snow, will heap a fire for you of pine-cones and you will sit and thaw while the cook prepares your lunch. Drink the wine of the district. But before you settle down to fire or meal, you must, if the snow will allow, go on to the long tunnel through which come all those Italian market carts which bring Italian produce from the Piedmont plain and which make so dangerous the Lower Corniche between Monte Carlo and Nice, since nothing will induce the Italian peasant to keep his own side of the road. As you emerge on the Italian side of the tunnel, even though you have seen no snow in coming up, you are likely to look over, should it not be too late in the season, a marvellous amphitheatre, snow-covered and glistening in the sun. By the way, before starting on this excursion make it clear to your chauffeur that you want him to take you up to Tenda by the road which goes first to Ventimiglia; you may return by dropping down on to Sospel and then to Menton – another wonderful road. Sospel, as I have said, has good golf-links – ‘the best golf to be had on the Riviera’ – so it is on the way to being spoiled, but it is still worth seeing, for its mediæval bridge in particular. And then the remoteness of Sospel is a fascination in itself – although it has a light electric railway, which brings you up from Menton in very little time. At Sospel, if it is sunny and still, lunch on the terrace of the Hotel de France, beneath which the little Bavera flows. I did so in the third week of December.

On or near this road from Menton to Sospel, or within striking distance of Menton by other routes, are several

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fascinating hill-top villages, which will more than repay a visit: Castillon, Castellar, Gorbio, Ste. Agnes, are the names of four of them. Another, and very short, excursion is to the Annonciata, an abandoned convent and a chapel, together with an hotel and restaurant, where one can lunch reasonably well. But one comes to the Annonciata, not for the chapel and not for the meal, but for its peace and for its gorgeous view.

Just now I mentioned Ventimiglia. Make a day's excursion of Ventimiglia and choose for it a Monday or a Friday, the days of the week on which you can see on your way La Mortola, the marvellous garden which Sir Thomas Hanbury began in 1867. It is at La Mortola that Mr. H. G. Wells, while giving the house another name, sets the scene of his novel *Meanwhile*, which, if you have taken my advice, you will have brought South with you. The Via Aurelia on its way up to La Turbie runs deeply through the grounds between high walls. 'Think,' says Mr. Wells's Mr. Plantagenet-Buchan, 'of all the hosts and armies and individuals that have thrust and shoved and whacked their mules and horses along this very Via Aurelia in your garden. Which to-night is just a deep black pit smothered in ivy. Grave of innumerable memories. If we went down there to-night to that old paved track I wonder if we should see their ghosts! Romans and Carthaginians, Milanese and Burgundians, French and Italians, kings and bishops and conquerors and fugitives. It would be a fit punishment for all their hurry and violence to find them there. . . .'

It is not the *new* town of Ventimiglia which has grown up by the station that I am anxious for you to see, although

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you can lunch in the station square on Italian food with Italian wine – the food and wine of the small Italian town rather than that of the Italian restaurant in foreign lands which, whether it be in Kensington, in New York, or in Monte Carlo, is always¹ a little toned down for the foreign palate. No, what you must see is the *old* Ventimiglia that, surrounded by its walls, covers and crowns the hill-top. If you came by car, send it on as you reach this old town from Menton; you can arrange to meet it again on the bridge in the valley below. This Ventimiglia is a warren of ancient palaces, of old cavernous houses, of streets mostly too narrow and too steep for wheeled traffic, of stairways and arches and flights of steps and old churches and poverty and children-beggars. One of the churches, San Michele, is on the site of a Temple of Venus. It is worth seeing. Have energy too and mount to at least the first of the gigantic fortresses that command Ventimiglia and which seem to me to present such puzzles to the archæologist and the historian. Some of the fortifications are very well preserved. It will be worth your while to go quite high into these hills. One fortress seems to follow another. But one knows that Ventimiglia was always in the wars. She had need of all the protection against her neighbours that she could afford.

The excursions up the valley of the Var – to Entrevaux, Pugets-Théniers, the Gorges de Daluis, Guillames,

¹ I must qualify that 'always'. The Isola Bella in Soho when Francesco Barberi had it was true Italian, and so, I dare swear, is the Taverna Medicea, which, having returned to the flesh-pots, he is, as I write, on the point of opening in Frith Street.

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Touët de Beuil – are not to be forgotten. Nor must Villeneuve-Loubet, St. Paul du Var (where I can recommend the Hostellerie de l'Orange Fleury), Vence, St. Martin, and St. Jeannat.

And there are, when the season is a little advanced and the restless Mediterranean has stilled its waves for a while, the excursions one can make by motor-boat. To Bordighera and Ventimiglia in Italy, to Antibes, to Cannes, to the Iles des Lérins. Such boats at Monte Carlo are to be found in the harbour a little seaward of the Quai de Plaisance restaurant. Make quite clear where you want to go and settle an inclusive price beforehand. On one occasion the boatman who we thought had contracted to take us to Cap d'Antibes swore that he had said Antibes, a very different place. The boat that took us from Monte Carlo to the Ile Ste. Marguerite spent about two and a half hours on the outward journey and rather less in coming back. I believe the charge was something less than five hundred francs. I am not sure. On another occasion we went to Menton and back, including waiting an hour while we had tea at the Pergola, for a hundred and twenty francs. On that occasion, as we came round Cap Martin, we were raced by a number of dolphins – anyhow, the boatman said they were *dauphins*; myself, I thought them porpoises. To follow the shore either westward or eastward from Monte Carlo by boat is to have a new idea of the grand beauty of the mountains of this sea-board and of the sweet beauty of its capes.

But there are endless excursions to be made from Nice

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and Monte Carlo and Menton. It is not a question of finding an excursion to make; it is a question of finding the time for all the excursions one wants to make. You can make practically all of them, if you have not a car of your own, in the large charabancs of the Auto-Riviera – they start from the Place du Casino in Monte Carlo – or the cars of the Brighton-Agency in the Avenue des Spélugue, or in the cars which are arranged by Cook and Sons. The three firms issue detailed prospectuses. The cars are not uncomfortable and the tours are cheap enough. Thus to go to Nice by the Higher Corniche and to return by the Lower costs twenty francs; to go all the way to St. Raphael, by the coast road one way and back over the Estérel, fifty-five francs; to the Gorges du Loup and Gourdon, forty francs. By the way, soon after this book is published, the two new railway lines, the one from Nice by Sospel to Breil, the other from Ventimiglia to Breil and on to San Dalmazzo di Tenda and Cuneo, will be ready for the public; they will open up a wonderful new country to walkers – if there are any walkers left.

There are certainly two places in the neighbourhood where you can hire decent cars without chauffeurs – cars covered by insurance, of course: at Nice, of Masset et Cie, 12 rue de la Buffa (Renault cars); at Monte Carlo, of the Casino Garage, 17 Avenue du Casino, Beausoleil.

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SINCE one does find in talking about the Riviera that the majority of people turn their minds without any prompting to the subject of gambling, it is, I feel, meet that I should devote this last chapter to roulette, to baccarat, to trente-et-quarante, to chemin-de-fer and, if I have room, even to boule, that ridiculous game in which you can lose your capital, however carefully you play, at an even greater rate than you can at any other game I know. For the odds against the player, as I have said, are in the proportion of five to four, whereas in roulette, the game which it most resembles, they are in the proportion of nineteen to eighteen or even less. And one plays boule for such trifling sums; it is the ideal game for pikers. The lowest stake is, I fancy, a franc, and the highest a hundred francs. Not that people do not sometimes win a little money at boule – a pound, two pounds, five, when luck has been persistently on their side and they have given their whole day and all their mind to it. I had a friend who even made enough money playing boule at Ostend, made it in five minutes or so, to pay all the cost of a month's holiday in Germany. It happened thus. My friend, knowing that roulette and its sister game had unexpectedly been put down in Belgium, nevertheless broke the journey from London to Mayence at Ostend in order to have a day with Victor Bethell, of whom mention has already been made in these pages. 'V.B.' had gone to Ostend to open as usual for the three months' season a branch of that Smith's Bank which

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was the forerunner of the Comptoir d'Escompte in Monte Carlo. When gaming was in full swing, the Bank, known to all gamblers, got all the English business. But that year it opened in vain, for Belgium had 'gone good'. . . . Well, my friend and 'V.B.' sat over their lunch at the Ocean and wondered how they would kill the hours of the afternoon, until someone, the waiter no doubt, said he had heard they were playing some sort of game in the Kursaal. They went to explore. It proved to be boule. My friend said he would play a coup or two so that he might hereafter be able to boast that he had made a bit in one Ostend season anyhow.

'Come away, you silly ass,' Bethell remarked; 'you'll be as cross if you lose five francs as if you'd lost a hundred at a decent game!'

My friend held by his whim. 'I'll stop directly I win — even if it's a franc,' he said.

One franc went on an even chance. It was raked away.

Two francs went on the same chance. They went.

Then five francs. The same result.

Then a louis. When that was lost, Bethell grew angry, and my friend, who had only enough in his pocket to defray a month's simple expenses, grew angry too, but in a different way. Bethell's idea was that it was all exceedingly dam silly. My friend's, that he would get his losses back.

'What's the maximum?' he asked the *chef* of the table, knowing full well that the answer should be to the effect that he could not stake on an even chance more than a hundred francs.

Now the *chef* and all the croupiers knew my friend and 'V.B.' exceedingly well. They knew them as players and

onlookers at the larger games in previous years. They treated the question as if it were serious, and the *chef* smiled his answer: 'To you, Monsieur, there is no maximum,' being certain that his challenge would not be taken up by a player of so much experience. Besides, no one else was at the table.

'Well, Bethell, I'll risk another hundred and then chuck it, win or lose,' my friend said, and, feeling in his pocket, pulled out a note rolled up in a ball and threw it on the table.

'*Tout va au billet*,' a croupier called, meaning that the whole of the note of a hundred francs was accepted as a stake.

The boule was started on its little voyage; it took rather longer than usual to show signs of where it was going. Running round the rim of one hole, it went off at a tangent to another, and then, after further hesitation, fell into one of the numbers that told my friend that he had won.

'Well, that's seventy-three francs to the good; pays for lunch, anyhow. Come, let's go and have another brandy,' he said, turning to light a cigarette.

But he saw that something was delaying matters when once more he turned his attention to the table. The croupier was unfolding, unscrewing, regarding, the bank-note, and he whose job it was to double it rose from his seat and walked round to the *chef*. They talked for a moment, putting their heads together, and sending glances towards 'V.B.' rather than towards my friend. 'V.B.' was *the* English banker of the town. They couldn't, they must have been saying, afford to play any monkey tricks when he was a looker-on.

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‘Well, why don’t you pay?’ my friend asked. ‘Anything the matter? It’s a good note, isn’t it?’

‘Oh yes, it’s good enough – but just one minute, Monsieur, a little minute; I must fetch the money,’ and he had vanished behind a screen at the back of the *caisse* at which, if anyone else had been playing, a cashier would have been handing out counters against silver and gold.

‘Stupid idiots! If they’re proposing to play, surely they’ve got money to pay a small sum like that without all this delay,’ my friend remarked.

In a minute the *chef* was back again, carrying two notes in his hand. Each note was for a thousand francs; one was very much crumpled.

You see, my friend had landed from the boat with about twelve hundred francs in his pocket. Two hundred he would spend at Ostend on its good food and its Burgundy, and in the train on the way to Mayence; he had determined that he would arrive at the German frontier with the equivalent of forty pounds in one note and he would not change it until he got there. The thousand-franc note and the one-hundred franc note were both rolled up in his pocket – and, forgetting that such a possibility existed, he had pulled out and staked the thousand francs when he was sure that he was only risking a hundred!

As I say, they paid him. In the circumstances they had to. I wonder what the Administration did to that *chef*! And I also wonder what my friend, whose whole holiday wealth was in that thousand francs, would have done if the ball had fallen into the wrong hole!

This book deals with the Riviera and not with memories of Ostend, but I am reminded that in those particular

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gambling rooms it was very much pleasanter to play, and that it seemed very much easier to win, than in the hells of Monte Carlo and Nice. The explanation used to be that at Ostend in the summer the windows of the gambling rooms were left open to the sea air and to the sun. One did not lose one's caution and one's intelligence as well as one's money. The bad air of the southern Casinos, especially that of Monte Carlo, is supposed to handicap the player, to poison his brain, to lessen the strength of his inhibitions. . . . I wonder whether it is so. Anyhow, the Belgians are a hardy race. They have not that terror of a little current of air that the Southern Latins have.

However, whether it be at Ostend or at Nice, have nothing to do with boule. It is, fortunately, a game that is not played in Monte Carlo itself. It is, however, played at all the other resorts on the Riviera; you can play it at Beausoleil in the building which nowadays has not only boule but mild baccarat in the antechamber of the theatre. I fancy that I have shown in my novel, *Every Wife*, how one may begin with francs at boule and go on to the risking of great sums at roulette and chemin-de-fer. Boule is a game to avoid. And watch that your children do not creep to the table side and risk their pocket-money at it when you are not looking and when they ought to be dancing!

The gambler's superstitions and his fears and his ideas might make a long book in themselves. There is something about the neighbourhood of a gambling hell which prevents the proper functioning of the grey matter of the brain. This one is delighted if in the gardens of the Casino, or in the trains, or, better still, in the Rooms

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themselves, he may meet a hunchback and contrive to touch his hump; that one is happy indeed if, as he mounts the steps, his foot should stumble; another will not play if he meets such and such an acquaintance whom he believes to bring him ill fortune. You must not wish a gambler 'Good luck!' when he leaves you for the tables. Then again there are in the Rooms certain people who every one is convinced are ill-luck carriers, for all the world as if they were 'carriers' of some terrible germ. Such are the lady known to many generations as 'the Queen of Italy' and that tall veiled lady who walks among the tables like a revenant. 'The Queen of Italy' indeed is supposed to have the power of the evil eye — which is, of course, absurd. Then there are all those countless folk who are believers in ill luck and good luck. I know one man who will only play when his horoscope promises success. An aura, he maintains, surrounds and guards him at certain hours of every week. My friend, Belfort Bax, a philosopher and a thinker if there ever was one, refused through all his adult life to believe in the existence of the Deity, but, being an assiduous player of roulette, he was actually convinced that some naughty spirit of



'THE QUEEN OF ITALY'

evil did, when it chose, preside over the board and could cause, and did cause, the ivory ball to behave in a malign manner entirely unreasonable and contrary to the laws of chance and mechanics. I would argue with him about it. He was willing to grant that his attitude appeared illogical, that his conviction must indeed seem absurd, but – well, there it was. And that dear old man had other ideas. For hours he would sit at the table, playing coup after coup in exactly the same way, with exactly the same stake. He was sure that directly after certain numbers came up then the chances of certain other numbers appearing were greatly increased. So most roulette gamblers believe. *Voisin*-players they are generally called, – that is to say, players who act on the assumption that after zero, for example, its two neighbours on the wheel, 26 and 32 are more likely to turn up than any other. And if not one of them, then *their* neighbours, and so on. This way of playing, however, implies a belief on the gambler's part that certain croupiers spin, intentionally or unintentionally, in so mechanical and exact a fashion that the ball has a tendency to fall time after time into the same section of the wheel, notwithstanding the many obstacles that would seem to make such a performance impossible except as the result of a fluke. And yet – and yet! . . . Have you ever seen what our best billiard players can do with a cue and a ball? Cinquevalli, too, comes to mind.

There are croupiers who are famous for their ability, real or fancied, to throw particular numbers. There are croupiers who encourage this belief in their fellows' skill. They will tell the lady sitting next to them, especially if she be pretty, to back such and such a number, and they

give the impression that they have secretly signalled their wishes to the spinner. I am content to believe that the average of success is once in thirty-seven times. Extraordinary things happen, however. I was dining one night years ago with Count George Erdödy and the talk turned on the question of whether a skilled croupier was able to influence the spinning of the ball. I laughed at the idea. He protested that it was quite possible; indeed, he maintained that he knew croupiers who were always prepared to oblige their friends. 'I'll show you after dinner,' he said. Well, after dinner he found a croupier. 'That's a thirty-four man.' The croupier caught his eye and smiled. By that time Count Erdödy had, like Tolstoy, put away childish things for himself, but he urged me to put something on 34. I did. It duly came up. I was paid, and bent over to remove my stake. It is against the convention, however, to remove your stake when you have an *en plein*. Count Erdödy protested. He said it would very likely come up again. 'Nonsense,' I replied. It did come up again, and several people who were standing round the table and had heard our friendly difference, laughed at me. A little cocotte, an old habitué of the Rooms, seemed to think it an unusually good joke. I could not see the fun of it myself! The next night I went alone to the same table at approximately the same hour. The same croupier was spinning. He caught my eye and smiled. For the fun of the thing I put a stake again on 34. It came up. 'This time,' said the young lady who had been foremost in her laughter twenty-four hours before, 'you will surely leave your stake on.' But I would not. I was too obstinate. I suppose I had that 'sense of probability' of which we shall hear directly. . . . Any-

how 34 turned up again. I believe I had the sense to laugh myself on this second occasion!

To the criticism that if a croupier could turn up a certain number or could even throw the ball in the neighbourhood of a certain number he would surely get his friends to come and play and would soon enrich both

himself and them, the believers in croupiers' skill reply that too careful a watch is kept, first by the *chef* of the table and then by the detectives of the Administration, for them to dare to play any such trick. There is a theory that croupiers are always under observation — even when they are on holiday; that they are shadowed hundreds of miles in order that it may be seen where they go and with whom they associate, whether they have more money to spend than can be accounted for. I wonder — and, on the whole, I doubt. Mr. Fisher Unwin published a book in which the integrity of the Casino from beginning to end was not only called in question but absolutely denied.

And there was another book, which

I should like to read again, *Les Mémoires d'un Policier de Monte-Carlo*, which not only challenged its integrity but told the most startling things about the Casino spy system. Every visitor to the Rooms had a dossier, compiled out of reports from his 'home town' and the reports of the detectives who watched his movements



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THE 'GRAND PENSEUR' OF MONTE CARLO SPORTING CLUB

in the Principality. If, for instance, he forgot his fidelity to his wife — well, then, down it went! An extravagance, of course, although the argument was presented with all seriousness and with all sorts of attestations of its author's credibility. That the Casino has a spy system of its own stands to reason; it has a mixed lot of visitors to deal with. The system, however, is not so inquisitive to-day as it was under Monsieur Camille Blanc's rule. It is one of the things on which the Administration has had to economize.

Of course nervousness begets a spy system, and a spy system, to justify itself, has to feed nervousness. The enemies of Monte Carlo say that if under either of the Blancs a man had turned up in the Rooms and had proved by continual play that he had discovered or had stumbled upon the 'secret of roulette' and could hope to go on winning until such a time as the Casino was forced by its losses to close its doors, then that man would not long be allowed to enjoy the fruit of his learning or of his good fortune. . . . It was supposed that no stone was left unturned in those days to learn what the big players were about. Read Mr. Kingston's *The Romance of Monte Carlo* on this subject, and that novel, *The Poisoned Paradise*, which Mr. Robert W. Service, the Canadian, wrote after a long sojourn in the Principality. He allowed himself to make the chief of the secret police do all sorts of weird things. And the chief's subordinates, without his approval, did things even more weird. While it is well to remember that Monaco is a Principality and that things can be done in the Principality that would not for a moment be allowed in the freer, more democratic air across the frontier, still one need not believe all that one is told. . . .

In *The Poisoned Paradise* there is a phrase, not of one of the characters, but of the author: 'He had in a curious degree that sense of probability which is so valuable to the player of roulette.' A sentence like that seems to me to beg the question; it means nothing. A player of roulette who developed in a large degree a sense of probability would give up playing. If you have a sense of probability you know how unlikely it is that you will ever get up from a sitting of an hour, let us say, without having lost. It is nevertheless the kind of phrase that keeps cropping up. Probability! What has probability to do with roulette? The late Richard A. Proctor dealt with the subject; he was by way of being a mathematician. So has Monsieur Henri Poincaré. They neither of them believe in probability as applied to roulette in the sense that Mr. Service uses the word. Docteur Ludus, Monsieur Chateau's hero, whom I have already quoted, is one of the few people who seemed to understand something about the question, and I imagine that nothing would astonish his creator more than to have it proved that 'a sense of probability' is valuable to a player – unless as a deterrent to his playing. The truth is, I fancy, that nobody of great eminence in the world of mathematics, unless it be Monsieur Poincaré, has ever thought it worth his while to bend his intellect to a study of roulette. I doubt whether there is anything serious to bend his mind to. If there is, let some ingenious editor commission Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan to go into the matter. I commend the suggestion to Lord Beaverbrook, who does not seem to like Monte Carlo as much as Lord Rothermere does; and to Lord Castlerosse, his colleague, who wrote only the other day in his exciting *Sunday Express* page that he 'should like to dissipate the bunk

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that is talked about this by no means delectable spot. There is no glory and glitter at Monte Carlo; no beautiful, sparkling women; only Greeks and their wives whose inflation only equals that of their currency.' Lord Castle-rosse must have been in Monte Carlo during very bad seasons. Most seasons have been bad in late years. But spring, summer, autumn and winter there are beautiful and sparkling women to be seen in all its streets, and there is almost too much glitter – especially in the summer. Still, do let Shoe Lane think of my Sullivan suggestion. And since this author is even better known in America than he is in England, I also commend the idea to the magazine editors of New York. He would at least dissipate the bunk that is talked about roulette – and the other games too, if he were given time and space.

It may be said, I think, without fear of contradiction, that the most determined and the most assiduous gamblers are women. I have told in *Caviare* the story of the elderly lady who kept the hero of that engaging romance hanging about the Rooms from eleven o'clock in the morning until midnight and who on quitting the table was, like the late Duke of Devonshire, quite pleased with herself because she ended much where she began. That was a true story. I know another lady who goes to Monte Carlo once or twice every year and who sits at a roulette table four or five hours a day for three weeks. *She* was very well satisfied when, a year ago, she was able to say that she had won ten pounds during her stay. On her next visit her gains amounted to three pounds. It was better than having lost, she thought. To see the woman gambler

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at her best – or worst – go one night at eleven o'clock and look at the northern end of the big trente-et-quarante table in the 'Sporting'. . . . Of the richer women gamblers one can say what the Reverend Christopher Anstey said in 1766 in his recently republished *New Bath Guide*, when he came to writing of the Bath hell of that period:

'Do they spare for Expences themselves in adorning?
Don't they go about buying fine Things all the Morning?
And at Cards all the Night take the Trouble to play,
To get back the Money they spent in the Day? . . .
But these to their Husbands more Profit can yield,
And are much like a Lilly that grows in the Field;
They toil not indeed, nor indeed do they spin,
Yet they never are idle when once they begin,
But are very intent on encreasing their Store,
And always keep shuffling and cutting for more. . . .'

They never are idle, these ladies; it is true. When the cards come to an end they settle themselves more firmly in their seats and, if for a moment they apply themselves to repairing the ravages of emotion, they come up to the call of 'time!' with increasing vigour. And they do not seem to win! In the circumstances I recall with amusement seeing a young and very pretty cocotte seize a vacant seat among them rather late one night before the War. She began playing in maximums; she seemed to start with about twenty-six thousand francs in her bejewelled golden bag. Two coups she won and then she lost a coup; then she won six coups in succession. She finished the deal at least a hundred and eighty thousand francs to the good and, having begun by saying that this was her last gamble of the season, since she was leaving by car soon

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after daybreak, she appeared to stick to her resolution – for, as far as I know, her place saw her no more that year. At that time a thousand francs were worth forty pounds.

Stories of the kind send novices to the South. To quote the Reverend gentleman again:

‘Methinks I should like to excel in a Trade,
By which such a Number their Fortunes have made.
I’ve heard of a wise philosophical Jew
That shuffles the Cards in a Manner that’s new . . .’

and so on. Apropos, I doubt whether Jews are any better than the next man at shuffling the cards. Generally at trente-et-quarante the Table is best pleased if the work of cutting the cards is done by a pretty girl, but if you listen to the comments of the players you will find that superstition governs their approval. If it is a man or a woman after whose cutting they have previously been successful they are satisfied and stake with assurance; but if, on the other hand, it is someone with whom they have experienced bad luck, they play very carefully till the table has settled down. ‘Until the table has settled down’; another superstition. Runs, they say, seldom begin at the beginning of the card.

The passion for gambling and the manner in which gambling is regarded by its victims is interestingly treated in the Memoirs of that rogue, ruffian and worldling, Giacomo Casanova di Seingalt, an author who may be considered something of an expert on the subject. He writes that he had been playing basset in the public rooms during a visit to Corfu, and, while I must leave a consideration of what basset was like to Mr. Frederic Jessel or someone equally learned in the literature of

games of chance,¹ we can, I think, take it for granted that it was a game in which there was some percentage in favour of the banker similar to zero or the *refait*: 'I had lost all my money, and sold or pledged all my jewellery. Such must be the fate awaiting every man who has a taste for gambling, unless he should know how to fix fickle fortune by playing with a real advantage derived from calculation and from adroitness, which defies chance. I think that a cool and prudent player can manage both without exposing himself to censure, or deserving to be called a cheat.' Here we have the Lord of Seingalt writing as so many people write to-day of 'the real advantage to be derived from calculation'. Again, he says that instead of devoting any 'time to the study, either moral or physical of the country . . . I passed my life at the coffee house, intent upon the game, and sinking, as a matter of course, under adverse fortune which I braved with obstinacy: I never won and I had not the moral strength to stop till all my means were gone. The only comfort I had, and a sorry one truly, was to hear the banker himself call me – perhaps sarcastically – a fine player every time I lost a large stake.' How often have I heard that same description applied to-day to the fool, old or young, who was getting rid of all the money he had just as fast as the rules of the game would allow, but with a certain non-chalance. . . .

Casanova spent much time at Corfu, where, among others, he met a man of fortune who judged him 'worthy of sharing the wise maxims without which gambling

¹ Mr. Jessel has since told me that basset was a game so prevalent and mischievous a couple of centuries ago that it was put down by Edict. It was revived under the name of 'faro'.

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must necessarily ruin all those who meddle with it.' Here are some maxims for gamblers that came either from that friend of the memoirist or another:

(a) 'Never play otherwise than with money in hand.'

(b) "'As you are fond of games of chance, I advise you never to punt. Make the bank, and the advantage must be on your side.'" ¹ "Yes, but only a slight advantage," I replied. "As slight as you please, but it will be on your side, and when the game is over you will find yourself a winner and not a loser. The punter is excited, the banker is calm. The last says, 'I bet you do not guess,' while the first says, 'I bet I can guess.' Which is the fool, and which the wise man? The question is easily answered. I adjure you to be prudent, but if you should punt and win, recollect that you are only an idiot if at the end you lose." "Why an idiot? Fortune is very fickle." "It must necessarily be so; it is a natural consequence. Leave off playing, believe me, the very moment you see luck turning, even if you should, at that moment, win but a single groat."'

Of course, whether in Casanova's book or in the mouth of the most experienced gambler in all the Riviera, all such sentences as this last are but the veriest poppycock. At what point are you to discover the turning away of luck? At the loss of a coup? You cannot have sat down expecting to win every coup you play! You can of course amplify and manipulate that particular piece of advice in such a way that it may be salutary, but the words by themselves are without practical meaning. Alter them

¹ An article on Chemin-de-fer in the Riviera (January, 1927) number of *Auction Bridge* shows his general agreement with this view: 'People do not realize that it is about eleven to ten on the banker winning.'

so that they mean, for example, that should you have had a run of luck and have turned, say, a thousand francs into five thousand, you put four thousand on one side, in a separate pocket even, and continue playing with only the thousand which is left. If it goes, then go too: you have made three thousand—and you can buy your wife a dress with that sum even in these days! Note, in passing, that Mr. S. R. Beresford, who has, I fancy, even more experience of gambling than Casanova's other preoccupations would allow the Italian to attain, shares also that curious, and surely mathematically unsound, idea that the player who has to bet that he guesses right is at a disadvantage compared with the banker who is simply the passive acceptor of the bet. 'I shall always put guesswork as a 2 per cent. disadvantage to the player,' says Mr. Beresford in *The Future at Monte Carlo*, and on that belief and others he founded his famous system, 'the Beresford', a reversal of the more famous 'Labouchere'. I think, however, that there may be another claimant to the invention of the 'anti-Labouchere', Major S. H. Browning, whose exposition is set out very clearly in the chapter on *trente-et-quarante* in *Hoyle's Games Modernized*, without, however, any instruction as to what is to be done with the stake and the score when the *refait* turns up. In the current *Hoyle* Major Browning deals with the two Monte Carlo games, and there is no better explanation of their difficulties and of the chief systems which are applied to their solution. In what he has to say about the 'anti-Labouchere' he advances much the same arguments and comes to much the same conclusions as Mr. Beresford.

You will hear while you are in Monte Carlo and watch-

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ing, or talking about, roulette a great deal of talk about the *tiers du cylindre*. It means backing the numbers that are next to one another on one third of the wheel. One of its advantages is that it is a wheel section of twelve numbers which you can back with six stakes placed *à cheval*. The numbers are 33 to 27: 5-8, 10-11, 13-16, 23-24, 27-30, 33-36, and if one of them does come up you are a fair winner. Then, if you play according to convention, you double your stakes and, if you are lucky again, re-double. It is a very favourite method of play. You may assume that it is neither better nor worse than any other. If you want to try it, hand a croupier six counters and announce that you want to play the *tiers du cylindre* and he will do the work for you and will see that you get your winnings – if you win. This habit of play, like so many others, is based on the belief that the croupiers, sometimes on purpose, sometimes from fatigue, sometimes from habit, continue so to spin the ball that it drops again and again into the same third of the cylinder.

It will be in the Monte Carlo atmosphere and it will please the Monte Carlo authorities if the last story I tell in this book is of ‘breaking the bank’, a story which, although it has been told already, I had confirmed by the hero of the incident himself, a man with a very wide acquaintance in the Principality and one who has already been mentioned by name in this book, Mr. Henley of the Tennis Club in very fact. It happened in November, 1892. Mr. Henley had lost a tidy sum of money, but he liked the Riviera too much to leave it – besides, he might win back what he had lost. He might! So he sent to England for more money. While still awaiting

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its arrival and with only a little English silver in his pocket, he went into the Rooms. He could change his English silver into a five-franc piece – and did, and that five-franc piece he put on 5. That number came up. He left on both stake and winnings, which together amounted to nine louis, the maximum for a number *en plein* in those days. 5 came up again. He now had three hundred and twenty-four louis. Much of this money he risked on 5 once more, on 5 and its *chevaux*, that is to say. 5 again! Again he backed 5, its *chevaux* and its *carrés*. 8 turned up. And so, with some variation of the numbers but with no fluctuation of fortune, it went on till he had won more than three hundred and fifty thousand francs, enough anyhow to enable him to send ten thousand pounds to England on the following day and to keep another four thousand to play with and to live on. For the details of the story I must refer you to Mr. Kingston. He tells you everything but he does not disclose the hero's identity. I would prefer Monsieur Chateau to work out the odds against Mr. Henley's run of luck, but it is, I think, a fact that, five francs having at that time been worth four shillings, my friend achieved a run of luck which figures mathematically as sixty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine to one. By the way, 5 was the number which was reported to have come up twice running for Mr. Schwab, the American iron-master, when he was on it with all the maximums. But Mr. Schwab is a privileged person.

The Viaticum? The viaticum is the name given to the sum of money which the Administration may advance you when you have lost all you have and cannot pay

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your own way home. You may not re-enter the Rooms till you have repaid it. The Administration grants this favour far less willingly than it did in Camille Blanc's time. '*Débrouillez-vous*' is what it seems to feel nowadays.

It may not be uninteresting if I give here some of the figures from the Administration's last balance sheet. 143,639,186 francs 85 centimes were made out of gambling – let us say a hundred and forty-three and a half million; tickets of admission brought in some nine million; and cloak-room tickets, six million. The actual profit seems to have been 98,677,506 francs 64 centimes.

And while you are in Monaco never forget that 'the strength of Monte Carlo is the weakness of the world'. This is an American saying, the invention of Mr. Herbert Adams Gibbons. You will find it in his *Riviera Towns*.



BONSOIR, MONSIEUR !

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Evalyn True Dillon

YOU WILL FIND HOW TO GET TO ALL THE PLACES, INCLUDING THOSE NOT ON THIS MAP, IN THE TEXT.

POLAR BEARS HERE

MR GRANT RICHARDS PERSONALLY RECOMMENDS THIS PETIT-POIS.

THE MISTRAL

TELEPHONE NICE-M (IT IS QUICKER TO MARSEILLES)

ENGLISH LADIES WALKING

CAUTION: HAS BEEN KNOWN ALONG THE COAST

STONE SATON BY SMOLLETT FEB. 1764

H.C. WELLS LOOKED DOWN FROM THE COAST OF PLEASURE.

TO FAR, FAR INTO THE NIGHT!



RARE EXAMPLE OF RIVIERA ARCHITECTURE

THIS TERRITORY HAS NOT YET BEEN DEVELOPED FOR ADVERTISEMENTS



HAVE AN ORANGE

ON THE COAST OF PLEASURE

LES ARCS

AS THE EDITOR AFTER SAINT RAPHAEL IS MUCH MORE EXCITING IT IS DRAWN TO A LARGER SCALE

ST TROPEZ

ILE DE PORT GR

PUGET

HYERES

TOULON

BANDOL

CASSIS

MARSEILLES

P.L.M. FROM PARIS AND LONDON AND MANY OTHER PLACES.

COMING OUT OF THIS TUNNEL IS WORTH A LONG BUMPY JOURNEY

MIMOSA

THE FIRST PALMTREE

ST PAUL

AIX EN PROVENCE

LOTS OF BOATS MAKING FOR XMAS IN JERUSALEM

002266307



167-13
H2
400
50



TREES
MENTIONED
BY SMOLLETT IN
JAN. 1764

TELEPHONE TO MONTE CARLO

THEY SAY YOU CAN GAMBLE
SOMEWHERE IN THESE PARTS

I NEEDN'T MARK WHERE
MUCH TREASURE IS LOST

ALTHOUGH THEY SPOIL THE GRANDE GRANCHE WITH WHISKY AND MINERAL WATER

LA
TUBIE

SOSPEL
MONTE-CARLO

MONACO
CAP D'AIL

BEAULIEU-
CAPFERLAT

EZE

YACHT
LOOKING
FOR MONACO
HARBOUR

AEROPLANE
FLYING TO
CORSICA

NICE

NICERICOIER
VILLEFRANCHE S/M

ROO
CORNE

CAGNES

ANTIBES

JUAN-LES-PINS



CANNES

LA NAPOULE
THEOULE

AGAY



IF YOU ONLY PLAY LONG
ENOUGH THE COMPASS
WILL ALWAYS SHOW YOU
THE WAY
NORTH



BOUILLABAISSE

MAP
OF
THE COAST
OF
PLEASURE
ALSO KNOWN AS
THE FRENCH RIVIERA
FAITHFULLY DRAWN BY
TOMMYROSS FROM THE
LATEST REPORTS OF THE
TRAVELLER GRANT
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MANY ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
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WHAT WE HEAR
YOU SAY

WHEN PASSING THIS LINE SAY
GOODBYE TO CHEMIN DE FER
AND DEMOCRACY

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